IN SEARCH OF JESUS CHRIST

BY

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PREFACE.

The origin of the book is a long personal history which is given in the *Introduction*. But its psychology is soon told. As a mere child I contracted a sudden aversion for image-worship. Perhaps the *Bodhodaya* ("the Rudiments of Knowledge") of the late Pandit Iśvar-chandra Vidyáságara of revered memory gave the start. I could not keep the sentiment within me, but actively gave vent to it in childish pranks. Other boys followed suit, but none stuck to it. It created a stir in my immediate surroundings in the village. Some would, by way of joke, call me a *Bráhma*, some a *Christian* Thereby I was misled to thinking the terms to be different names applied to the same set of persons. My elder brother, four and a half years older than myself, was associated with the Bráhma Samáj in Calcutta which I came to know subsequently, and understood that the Bráhmas were theists. Then I myself came to the metropolis at the age of sixteen and used to go to the Samáj with him, and regularly attended the sunday preaching of the Christian Missioners at the Beadon Gardens. The opinion was already unconsciously formed by me that the Christians were monotheists like the Bráhmas, and therefore I had a soft corner for them in my heart. But from their preaching I found their religion not a whit less idolatrous than the popular Hinduism which I had early discarded. The more I heard them, the more embittered I felt within and reaction set in. My disappointment created in me almost a personal grievance against them. But in the Bráhma Samáj I found no echo of my heart. On the contrary, I heard there a different note sounded about Christ and Christianity. For the first time I learnt from Mr. Hammergren, a Swedish Bráhma, that the Bráhma Samáj attitude in that respect was wrong. He would tear the traditional Jesus to shreds. Afterwards I came to know that the Scandenavian scholars were among the initiators of the new method of Biblical criticism. But England takes in new things very slowly, and we Indians take our lessons from Englishmen. However, I could not then clearly perceive the grave nature of the mistake indicated by Mr. Hammergren. But mistake it was, I felt inwardly. My bitterness grew from bad to worse when I found the educated people catch the contagion of the Samáj and take their cue in this respect too from the Bráhmas. The conviction gradually possessed me that the Bráhma Samáj should undo

the mischief unwittingly done by it. But to my utter chagrin I found quite the contrary tendency daily gaining ground in the Samáj. I wished some abler hand had undertaken the task. I waited and waited. Then the urge came upon me: if anybody at all, why not I, I am a Bráhma, however unworthy of the honoured name. Now I thought I had waited too long, as the Christian missionaries showed no sign of mending their crude orthodoxy in the light of modern scholarship, but they went on merrily with their disgusting propaganda to which, against the spirit of the times (*Zeit-geist*), even educated Indians succumbed, and for which the misguided zeal for Christ of a certain section of the Bráhmas is not a little responsible. I thought I should wait no longer, however incompetent I thought myself for the task. Certain articles were forthwith published in 1922 in the *Indian Messenger*, the English organ of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj, under the able editorial control of my respected friend, Mr. Pratul Chandra Som who kindly gave me free access to its columns, and at whose suggestion the title of the book has been changed from "The Gospel Narrative : History or Myth" as originally contemplated.

Some friends urged me to collect the articles and publish them in the form of a booklet. These articles, being now amply modified and revised almost beyond recognition, and enlarged in the light of recent researches of Vedántaratna Maheschandra Ghosh, B.A. B.T. of Házáribágh Bráhma Samáj published in the columns of the *Modern Review* and *Pravási* have formed Part I of the Book, the other two parts are quite new.

Now following the logic of half-a-loaf-is-better-than-no-bread, the book is offered to the public for what it is worth. The book claims no originality, but it places before the reader the most up-to-date information on the subject in a connected form. If I have done this, I have succeeded. If the book can wean a single soul away from the Christian Church I will deem my labour well recompensed. Because I also am firmly of opinion with Hon. Bertrand Russel who boldly proclaims in his recent lecture—*Why I Am Not A Christian* :

> *I say quite deliberately that the Christian religion, as organised in its Churches, has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world.*

And the Hon. Mr. Russel is not alone in that role. Here is a Roland for our Oliver. The following is the latest pronouncement of the 'gloomy dean' :

> *The unscrupulousness of the priestly character is almost proverbial. The man who wants to make a square deal neither to do nor to be done—*

would rather deal with profane Esau than with pious Jacob. Hence the wide-spread opinion that religion and conduct have not much to do with each other (as quoted in *Literary Guide, June, 1927*).

Of course, Dean Inge speaks of the Christian religion. The Hindus have been schooled to be virtuous, though according to Professor Mc Kenzie's *Hindu Ethics*, their philosophy should not have allowed them to be ethical, as Dr. Hopkins so humorously puts it in his *Ethics of India*. I shall be very glad to see a check put in the way of the foreign mission of Christianity. It is, therefore, very agreeable that Mr. Walter Mann has recently in his *Christianity in China* formulated an almost unchallengeable indictment of Christian Missions to the so-called heathen, and with indubitable facts and figures exposed the inner hollowness of their plea to convert others to Christianity. But what about Christianity in Christian lands? See page 225 and *passim*.

My best thanks are due to the Vedántaratna for placing his well-stocked library in my absolute disposal. I could get the necessary books in no other liberary in India. His personal interest was all the more helpful. He has helped me by making fruitful suggestions and enlightened criticisms, and by correcting the proofs in some parts. He found out for me many references from his extensive reading. Without his assistance I should not have achieved even the little success I trust to have done in carrying out my plan.

I am also greatly indebted to my wife for her materially helping me by writing out fair copies of the manuscripts of the whole book for the press, and also reading the proofs. The *Contents* and the *Index* are her handiworks.

Above all, I have to acknowledge my immense debt of gratitude to Rái Báhádur Śreemán Satischandra Chaudhuri, my generous cousin, but for whose pecuniary help, always given to a noble cause, it would have been well-nigh impossible on my part to undertake the venture necessarily involving a great financial risk. He has facilitated the publication of the book by readily taking upon himself the responsibility of paying the entire cost of the publication, thereby placing me above all anxiety on that score.

CALCUTTA.
The 25th August,
1927.

D. N. Chowdhuri.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

has not been thought necessary as authors quoted have been exhaustively given in the *Index*. Referring to them their *works* will be easily ascertained. Scriptural references are too numerous, so have not been included in the *index*.

Principal **ABBREVIATIONS** are given below—

A Short History of Christianity—S. H. C.
Christianity and Mythology—C. M.
Comparative studies in Vaishnavism and Christianity—*Vaishnavism and Christianity*, *or* V. C.
Ecce Deus—E. D.
Encyclopedia Biblica—Ency. Bib.
First Three Gospels—F. Th. G.
Golden Bough—G. B.
Golden Rule—G. R.
Hibbert Journal—H. J. or Hib. J.
Historical Jesus—H. J.
Jesus in Modern Criticism—J. M. C.
Jesus Problem—J. P.
Literary Guide—L. G.
Modern Review—M. R.
New Testament—N. T.
Old Testament—O. T.
Open Court—O. C.
Origins of Christianity—O. C. or O. Ch.
Pagan Christs—P. C.
Primitive Christianity—Pr. Ch.
Radical Views about the New Testament—*Radical Views or* R. V.
Synopticus Evangelicum—*Synoptiques* or S. E.
Synoptical Gospels—S. G.
Sacred Books of the East—S. B. E.
Supra—S. or S.
The Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount—*Jewish Sources.*
The Old Testament and After—O. T. A.
The Sources of the Morality of the Gospels—S. M. G.
Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus—*Witnesses.*

CONTENTS.

PART II.

JESUS THE MESSIAH

ADDENDA

INTRODUCTION.

My collegiate education began in the long defunct Duff College which is, after its amalgamation with the General Assembly's Institution, now named the Scottish Churches College. My systematic study of the Bible began there. When I was taking my first lessons in the new Testament I read Theodore Parker's *Discourse* along with it, prompted to take that course for the purpose of combating a fellow-student newly converted to Christianity. The result was that imperceptibly I turned a critic of the Gospel narrative. So I never took the narrative as unmixed history. Very early I was convinced that there was a great deal of allegory in *it* in common with all other scriptural literature. I never accepted the missionary claim that the Christian scriptures were on a different footing from the *puráńas*. When a mere boy I asked my late lamented elder brother Jośodálál Chaudhuri whether the miracles should not be interpreted allegorically. He was conversant with the thing. He told me that the Christians for obvious reasons would not accept that view. So when I found the missionaries insist on the literal interpretation of miracles, my belief in the historicity of the story as a whole was further shaken. And Rájá Rámmohun Roy also taught me to think in this way as he eliminated a great deal from the gospels like Bankimchandra who, after him following in his wake, tried to recover the life of Krishna from the *debris* of ages.

Now I rose from my study of the New Testament with the firm conviction from internal evidence that there was no natural connection between the *Gospels* and the *Acts*. I could not then much appreciate *Paul*, though it seemed to me that he was a greater man and more liberal-minded than Jesus, but nevertheless a dupe. I confided the inner troubles, to which my studies had forced, me, to my preceptor, Pandit Sitánáth Tattvabhushan, a lifelong friend, philosopher and guide to me, but for whose appreciation and encouragement and other helps under otherwise very depressing circumstances I should not have felt bold enough to take upon myself this onerous task. Half jocosely, half seriously he informed me that the real founder of Christianity was the woman who stole Jesus' body from the tomb; and he advised me to read Renan's *Jesus*. When I read it I was all the more mystified. Renan is of opinion that Jesus was the most

perfect of men ever born, and yet he says that his hero, for the propagation of his gospel was not above resorting to 'pious frauds' with which Christian history is permeated through and through. In the meantime Dr. P. K. Ray, afterwards my revered Professor of Philosophy in the Calcutta Presidency College, in an X'mas Session of the Theological Society pointed out that Christ could not have possibly been born on December 25. The Biblical description is against it. He gave internal evidence that the time was not winter. On the other hand, the late Dr. Henry Stephen, then a Professor in the Duff College, when teaching us Paul's *Epistle to the Hebrews*, explained to us with reasons that the epistle was written not by Paul but by one imbued with his spirit. This opened my eyes as to the nature of Biblical criticism then in vogue, and I began to enquire whether or not there were many more flaws in the traditional view of the gospel-Jesus. Reflecting over it for some time I became convinced that there was a hoax played on the unwary disciples which turned the cold calculating peasants of the *Gospels* into the fiery martyrs of the *Acts*. Jesus' historicity was not yet questioned. My study continued. Next, after passing my B. A. examination I got a copy of the Old Testament from Dr. Hector, the then Principal of the Duff College, whom I learnt to revere as a truly pious man. He, when latterly presenting me with his own copy of *The Parallel New Testament* still cherished by me as a valuable gift from a beloved tutor, expressed the hope that I would soon come to Christ. I did not disappoint him. To this I replied in writing that I was already a Johannine Christian inasmuch as I believe, "I and my Father are one". I then used the expression in the Vedantic sense. But in that even I only anticipated by a score years "A Clergyman of the English Church" who proves from the gospels "*that man, and not Jesus only*, *is the Christ of God*" (see *Is Jesus the Christ* ?). The Athanasian creed too comes almost to the same point: "As the reasonable soul and the flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ." However, I took to the reading of the Old Testament also with equal avidity, and to my great surprise I found that the claim of the newness of the New Testament could not be substantiated. I marked, as I proceeded, passage after passage as to the love of God and love of man. These ideas are there in the Hebrew scriptures equally strongly insisted upon.

Some are in the habit of thinking that in the old dispensation the idea of the love of God or of man is more or less a dead letter, but in the New it has quickened. As a matter of fact both good and bad ideas have been simply transferred from the one to the other wheneve

found necessary. In commenting on the 'narrow gate' (*Lk.* 7^{13-14} and 13^{23-24}) Dr. C. G. Montefiore, the great Hebrew scholar, and not at all a hostile critic, says: "The horrible doctrine that many go to 'destruction' and few to 'life eternal' was not invented by Jesus, but it seems to have been accepted by him [Montefiore is unwilling to make Jesus originally responsible for this utterance which Harnack insists on putting to his credit. And Harnack is a Christian and Montefiore a Jew!]. One wonders how any man could hold it, yet believe in a loving God" (*Synoptic Gospels*, Revised Ed., (1927) vol ii, p. 121).

It will not be out of place to evaluate the central doctrine of Christianity in the light of the idea of a loving God, and see whether it is living faith evolved in an apostolic religion or dead tradition adopted as a matter of form. "What should we think", observes George Grimm, "about a father who should send his child into the world or even only generate it knowing for certain that it would later on commit "voluntarily" a crime that would be punished with lifelong imprisonment, and thus remain through all its life in deepest despair (*The Doctrine of the Buddha*, 1926, p. 186). Further on he reflects: "Must not the intellect first be created, that may bear such thoughts? Is it not, moreover, contrary to every law of thought that the fault of a poor finite creature, which itself must therefore be limited and finite, should be revenged by an infinite punishment?" (p. 107). Then, interpreting Schoupenhauer, he puts the question: "Is it conceivable that the same god who orders men to overlook and forgive every offence, acts himself, in quite a different manner, inflicting eternal punishment even after death?" So Mr. Grimm dismisses it "without more ado", because it cannot stand the trial at the assize or intellect". (Ibid). No, the nature of a living faith is quite different. It is the outcome of man's direct perception of God and therefore can not be conflicting either with human intellect or with divine nature. However, we should not forget that Jesus *cried* on the cross, but Rabbi Akiba *smiled* when he, under a similar circumstance sacrificed his life for God.

> When Akiba was being tortured, the hour for saying Shema [particular texts selected from the Scripture] arrived. He said it and smiled. The Roman Officer called out, "Old man, art thou a sorcerer, or dost thou mock at thy sufferings that thou smilest in the midst thy pains?" "Neither", replied Akiba, "but all my life, when I said the words, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and might and soul, I was saddened, for I thought, when shall I be able to fulfil the command? I have loved God with all my heart and with all my

possessions; but how to love Him with all my soul (i.e. life) was not assured to me. Now that I am giving my life, and the hour for saying the Shema has come, and my resolution remains firm, should I not laugh ?" And as he spoke his soul departed (*Ib.* p. 200).

Is it more quickening or less quickening, pray ?

However, along with this I was being acquainted with the literature of the Higher Criticism of the Bible which rejected, as spurious, John's Gospel (see p. 246 and *passim*) altogether and most of the Epistles to begin with. This sent me furiously to think : If the one is false, why not also the others ? Do they not contradict one another ? Do they not all possess the same value ?

At this critical moment of my mental cogitations I was introduced to Dr. Schmiedel's famous *Pillar Passages* which threw a flood of light on the dark path. When such a staunch believer in the historicity could not get to the life of Jesus except through the back door of dubious interpretation of a very few trite passages chosen at random for which quite different explanations are readily forth-coming, what historical importance can be granted to this jumble of contradictions and inconsistencies ? Even among the historicist exegetes one destroys one part, the other another part which was retained by the former and between themselves they destroy the whole edifice. None retains even the one-tenth. If all the parts separately are untrue why should not the whole be taken as a fabrication ? At this juncture or thereabout Dr. Arthur Drews' *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus* fell into my hands and the castle in the air vanished in a trice. The trick alluded to above was not played on the disciples but on the world at large. My illumination came through a nature-myth (pp. 296, 332 and *passim*). There is the resurrection of the sunny spring after the death of the pale winter. In the wintry night of crucifixion they betrayed, they denied, they ran like rats into their holes ; but in the sunny spring of resurrection, nature's rising from dead,—nature's coming to new life,—they sang, they shouted, they acted like lions. This transition from death to life in nature has found expression in all countries in popular festivals at the coming of spring. But it is a myth. And this central myth being affiliated to many sub-myths and legends has been historicised. Objections to it are futile (p. 268 and *passim*).

Some are misled to thinking that such explanations are newly invented to meet a certain situation. They are wholly mistaken. The myth formations as well as mythical explanations are as old as the hills (See p. 303). After showing how to explain myths in five different ways from the incidents of the Greek mythology, then considered as

historical facts, Sallustius prays: "May these explanations of the myths find favour in the eyes of the Gods themselves and the souls of those who wrote the myths" (As translated by Prof. Gilbert Murray in *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 193).

My decision was taken and I arrived at a conclusion at every step of which I have been sustained by authors who, though they approach the subject from different standpoints, come to the same or similar conclusion—the conclusion I have tried to present in this volume. The Rt. Hon'ble J. M. Robertson whose 70th birth day has recently been celebrated with much *eclat* has all along remained my inspiration. His scientific method of procedure I have in my humble way tried to follow.

But to this conclusion I have been propelled by an inner necessity also—a necessity arising out of the following anomalies in the gospels that can not be removed if Jesus is taken to be an historical person. I have read and re-read the Bible. With every reading Jesus has appeared to me more and more a psychological puzzle if considered an actual human personality.

a. The Jesus fig ure of the gospels is wholly based on the misconstrued prophecies of the Old Testament, the Scripture of the Jews. If they are prophecies at all, they were prophecies of a Jewish Messiah whose primary mission would be to deliver the Jews from the oppression of the Gentiles. The Jews have discarded Jesus for the non-fulfilment of the prophecies, but the non-Jewish peoples, though they regard the Old Testament as an incubus, have accepted him on the strength of those very prophecies of the Old Testament. Besides the mission of the Messiah has ended in infinitely enhancing the trials and tribulations of the Jews. Could anomaly be made more anomalous?

b. On the other hand, if the Bible were a drama of salvation and if Jesus were God come to give his blood for the redemption of humanity as the Christians claim, then the Jews, by bringing about the crucifixion, have, as the sole instrument in the hand of God, helped the consummation of that divine plan. Therefore, instead of being cursed they should have been blessed in the churches by a set liturgical formula. That is logic. But the history has taken exactly the opposite course, betraying the utter unhistoricity of the narrative.

c. I have in the following pages referred several times to Vedánta-ratna Maheschandra Ghosh who has to a degree redeemed the Bráhma Samáj in the matter mentioned in the *Preface*. He believes in the historicity. Though he calls him a *great man*, I presume, for courtesy's

sake, he, notwithstanding, has mercilessly, by psycho-analysis, drawn out rather a primitive man from the personality of Jesus as represented in the Gospels (Vide *Modern Review*, Jan. 1924. p. 174). The *tragedy* is due to the fact of taking a myth for history. Jesus represents a party and not a person. The drama was thrown into this form from the exigency of a difficult situation. At that time the Christians were wholly separated from the Jews and they were fighting like so many beasts, as a pagan writer has pointed out.

d. The Pharisee, as he has been depicted in the gospels, can not be a contemporary of the gospel Jesus. The modern Hebrew authorities are unanimous that the first century Pharisees could have no quarrel with Jesus' view, both theoretically and practically. Such a distinguished Jewish scholar as Rabbi Dr. Emil G. Hirsch is obliged to flout the gospel view. He says : "The supposition that Jesus's religious opinions and practice clash with the Judaism of his time is clearly untenable" (as quoted by Campbell). It is in the second century, after the Jews made their final stand against Rome under Emperor Hadrian and the Christians sided with the Imperial government, that a bitter enmity ensued between the parties (p. 175 and *passim*). At this stage the universal religion that was born of the Dispersion of the Jews after the fall of the Temple—a new form of some Jesus-cult—was wholly repudiated (*Mk.* 3[22]) by the orthodox Jews, though at the outset no distinction could be made between the Christists and the Messianist Jews even in the metropolis. This repudiation of Christianity, in one interpretation of it, seems to have been dramatised as the crucifixion of Jesus by the Jews. Myths are multifocal. However, in order to save the face of Rome the Jews were painted in the lurid light of veritable murderers making the New Testament a gospel of hate. Few unbiassed non-Christian readers of the Bible have ever found in it the so-called Christian charity shown to the Jews. Both John and Jesus have been made to accost them with : "Ye generation of vipers." The Bible was engineered to generate a hatred of the Jew for the political reason mentioned above, i. e. to curry favour with the power that be. "To render unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's" was never the prevailing Jewish view in the first century. The beast in man comes out in all its ugliness when his religious animosity is roused. We have known it, at our cost, in the history of the Bráhma Samáj, how, under such circumstances, men, otherwise very high and noble, descend to much lower levels. The Christian hatred of the Jewish race has been typified in Saccard's attitude in M. Zola's *L'Argent*: "Ah ! the Jew ! It was

something like a revolt of his very flesh, a repugnance of the skin, which, at the idea of the slightest contact, filled him with the disgust and anger", and who "lost all self-consciousness as soon as a Jew was in question". But how has this hatred been generated, not here, not there, but everywhere in Christendom? Read the gospel narrative as an historical account and it will never fail to inoculate you with the virus of this universal hatred of the Jew.

e. This is an absurd position—the Jew has given the Christian his saviour. However grave their offence, real or imaginary, if Jesus were a historical person and the accounts were written by his companions or under their influence about an actual event, this attitude would be an impossibility, consider it from whatever standpoint you like. By implication it proves the unhistorical character of the Biblical account.

f. All the same it makes the Christian Bible a gospel of of hatred, a hymn of hate from end to end—a view authoritatively put forth by Rabbi A. P. Drucker, the American author of *The Trial of Jesus*, in his illuminating article: *The New Testament as a Text Book* in the *Open Court*, 1911. The Rabbi, after relating the distracting details and subterfuges adopted to incite the reader's hatred against the Jew in the story of the crucifixion, concludes: "Hence the final impression after perusing the New Testament is not so much love for Jesus as hatred for the Jews. The custom up to the present time has been to lead Christian young people to a love of Jesus through the medium of hatred toward the Jews." And Rabbi Drucker is not to be singled out for championing this unpleasant opinion. *The Inquirer* (May 3, 1924) in reviewing the able paper on *The Place of the Bible in the Sunday School Teaching* by Miss Heigh, Head Mistress of Channing House School, Highgate, observes: The Rev. D. W. Robson said he had always held that the Bible was a dangerous book to put into the hands of young people." With a bleeding heart Montefiore writes: "The famous cry, 'crucify him' is probably unhistoric, but of what oceans of Jewish blood, and of what endless Jewish misery wrought by Christian hands, has it not been the cause? One man was unjustly put to death: Millions have been unjustly killed, tortured, hated, because of the one" (S. G., vol. i, p. 376). Yet the charge would be unjustly laid at the door of the Jews even if the tale were taken as historical. But will this bring about a change of heart in the Christian? Little chance!

However, we cannot more fittingly bring this *Introduction* to a close than by quoting the following trenchant but weighty remark of

Dupuis which, though made more than a century and a quarter ago has lost none of its force :

> There are large numbers of men so perversely minded that they will believe everything except what is recommended by sound intelligence and reason, and shrink from philosophy as the hydrophobic shrink from water. These people will not read us, and they do not concern us; we have not written for them. Their mind is the prey of the priests, just as their body would be the prey of worms. We have written only for the friends of humanity and reason. The rest belong to another world; even their god tells them that his kingdom is not of this world—that is to say, not of the world in which people use their judgment—and that the simple are the blessed, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Let us, therefore, leave to them their opinions, and not envy the priests such a possession. Let us pursue our way, without lingering to count the number of the credulous. When we have unveiled the sanctuary in which the priest shuts himself, we can hardly expect that he will press his followers to read us. We will be content with a happy revolution and we will see that, for the honour of reason, it is so complete as to prevent the clergy from doing any further harm to mankind.

In Search of Jesus Christ

Part I.

JESUS THE TEACHER

CHAPTER I.

Preamble

Is Gospel Teaching Unique ?

The Gospel of Jesus was a new wine according to the Evangelists, (See *Mark* 2[22] and *Luke* 5[37-38]) and it could not safely be put into old bottles. Following the cue thus furnished by the New Testament, the Christian theologian has ever maintained that the light that came to shine on earth with Jesus was unique in its origin and character. But critical scholars find no justification for such a claim. For instance, Dr. Arthur Drews, the author of the epoch-making book, *Christ-Myth*,* concludes, in his *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*, that "there is *nothing, absolutely nothing*, either in the actions or words of Jesus, that has not a mythical character or cannot be traced to parallel passages in the Old Testament or the Talmud, and is therefore under suspicion of being derived from them" (p. 290). Another eminent

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* The publication of which "was like the broad wing of the wind suddenly smiting the smooth seatunic and ruffling it instantly, into foam. All Germany was thrown into ferment. From peasant's hut to emperor's yacht, from Bier Garten to Cathedral, from ponderous tome to fluttering feuilieton all things became animated with his great denial. Every month called for a new edition of his famous work which flew all over Europe and beyond the seas ; it was felt that for the first time in history the nerve of the great question concerning the origin and therewith the nature of our Christian civilization had been touched." And his reply to the critics in his *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus* has smashed all opposition. (*Open Court*, 1912.)

authority, Joseph McCabe, once a Roman Catholic priest, and still a believer in the historicity, has quite conclusively proved in his informing book, *The Sources of the Morality of the Gospels*, that the teaching of Jesus was the common moral teaching of that age (p. 171). He cites parallels from the Old Testament, the Talmud, and Greek and Roman teachers, remarking that "a fifth column might have been added to show that the sentiments were familiar in more ancient Persia, Egypt and Babylonia; and a sixth to show their currency in India and China" (p. 298). From such historico-comparative studies we come to know that the discourses attributed to Christ possess not a shade of idealism that was not the current coin of the day, or had not found expression in ages before. "We find", says Mr. McCabe earlier in the same book (p. 171), "in Judaism itself—in the Old Testament, the Rabbinical teachings, the Essenian tenets, etc.,—all the sentiments ascribed to Christ, for he must have been familiar with these sources." At least the evangelists and their numerous interpolators were familiar, and this conclusion is fully corroborated by unsophisticated common sense. No doubt, Matthew would have us believe that people wondered at the master's teachings, so much so that they thought they surely found in him a prophet. The Jewish audience, however, to the critical reader of the Bible, never seems to have been much impressed by the "unique" personality of the gospel figure. Strauss, an advocate of the historicity of Jesus, will bear us out. The substance of what he says is that, among his immediate disciples, there was none who was so much impressed by the master as to be able to follow him. Was not the whole edifice of Christianity designed by the imagination of those who had no personal contact with him? "The deification of Jesus," Strauss remarks, "was begun by Paul, who had not known him as a man, continued by those who, like the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, were in a like position, and completed by the author of the Fourth Gospel, who was separated from him by a still greater distance of time and space" (*The Life of Jesus*). Since he wrote, much light has been thrown on the subject. Is it not a fact that when Jesus was crucified he did not leave a single convert behind, being denied even by Peter, the rock on which he built his castle? We have been accustomed to believe, because it has been most assiduously taught and systematically hammered into our ears, that the man who *sees* the truth must needs bring in conviction to others. If Jesus as a teacher is to be judged by the impression he made on his following, how is it

that a religious preacher with all the enthusiasm of a proselytiser after three* years' strenuous efforts could hardly make an impression on a single person who would follow the master to the death? No unbiassed man would think very highly of such a teacher. It is time we give up our dogmatism, this way or that. We must revise our estimate of the Carlylean dictum that "man knows nothing more sacred than heroes and reverence for heroes." The centre of gravity of our spiritual life must in all cases be the confident surrender to God within. To seek it in a historical personality, however "unique" and "impossible of invention," is to invert the process which will never serve the purpose of the true religion hat comes from the depths of one's innermost soul and is never manufactured outside. It is the natural expression of a free and unfettered mind. Is it astonishing, as Dr. Drews has remarked, that ardent souls would deprecate the idea of measuring the deepest cogitations of the modern mind by the teachings of Jesus and of referring them to a world of thoughts that has nothing to recommend it but the antiquity of its traditions and the artificially engendered appreciation of everything connected with it? But crude Christian evangelism will not be surpassed in its provoking impudence, as is evident from the remarks of Bishop H. Leicester Smith, who says: "Now is the time to proclaim Jesus Christ as the only Saviour with a passionate devotion and with a holy zeal that will set India, now smouldering, into a flame of love and devotion to Christ"† Such preposterous claims awakened India will no longer let pass unchallenged. The Bishop, we find, will not allow even Krishna to approach his Christ. May we enquire of the reverend gentleman if he knows in what measure his Christ is indebted to India for the devotion now claimed in his behalf?

Truth, personal or Universal?

Christianity: Its Composite Character.

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* There is no end of speculation about the period—one year or twenty (?) as it fits in with contradictory ideas found in the gospels.

† As quoted in the Calcutta *Indian Messenger*, p. 170, April, 1924. However, such immodest but motived utterances have not failed to elicit an angry reply from the Bishop of Chotanagpur that "India is no more at the feet of Christ to-day than it was twenty years ago, in fact, it has gone farther from Christ." (*Reuter's Special Service*, London, 24-4-25). Yes, even the Christian Mission is not without its saving grace.

Much material exported from India* entered into the making of the very *body* of his Christ. The contributions of the Krishna *cum* Buddha cults to the evolution of Christianity from long before the Christian era cannot now be reasonably challenged. Mr. J. M.

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* Dr. Drews suggests that Christ's death was fixed at 34 A D., because that would be 36 years before the fall of the Temple, the beginning of the *Kali yuga* for the Jews. It is said in his book (*Witnesses*, p. 21) that Krishna predicted the advent of *Kali* after 36 years of his death. We have not yet been able to find out the Sanskrit text to corroborate him. But, all the same, 36 is a mythical number. Like the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of the Temple 36 years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the destruction of *Jaduhul*, the counterpart of the massacre of the Jews, with the death of Krishna himself being pierced at the foot while unfriended by any, as in the case of Jesus, closely followed by the fall of Krishna's house of Dwaraka—was fated to take place 36 years after the battle of Kurukshetra. The Pandavas were to reign 36 years after that catastrophe. (Vide pp. 243-244, *Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists* by Nivedita and Coomarswamy). But the parallel is far more exactly drawn in the following way. Jesus died on the cross and he had predicted the fall of the Temple, which took place 36 years after his death. In one line of the development of the Mahabharata myth, Bhisma is a sun-god, the fairest indication of which is given by connecting his death with a solstice. He died on the bed of arrows. Of this the crucifixion seems to be merely a variation. Those who have carefully observed the sunset have not failed to see the picturesque scene of the setting sun, at least on some occasions, surrounded by the arrows of shooting rays. This is veritable crucifixion of the sun-god wearing the crown of thorns. Exactly thirty six years after this the fall of Dwaraka came about. To the devout Hindus this place is still the Temple of God. And this destruction of the Jadavas was predicted by Gandhari (*Vide Mahabharata*, Nariparva XXV, 44). With the destruction of Dwaraka the Iron age entered the world with full force (*Vishnupurana* 5-38-8 ; Vide 4-24-40 ; also *Bhagavat* 12-2 33). I suppose Dr. Drews has made a confusion and everybody knows that myths are multifocal.

Seydel (*Buddhalegende*) has not actually attempted to draw up a gospel derived from Buddhistic material; but the parallels he has adduced from the life of Buddha are in many places very striking, at least so far as the story of the childhood of Jesus is concerned (To the virgin birth, the annunciation to Mary, the star, the gifts, Simeon, the incident at twelve years of age, must be added also the presentation in the temple ; and here it is worthy of remark that such a presentation was not actually required either by the passage cited in Luke or yet by any other passage), and *his proof that the Buddhistic sources are older than the Christian must be regarded as "irrefragable"*. (Italics are ours), Encyclopædia Biblica, *Gospels*, 124d, by Prof. Paul W. Schmiedel. Detailing the same particulars of the Buddha story, Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter remarks : "Here is a legend which shows so many correspondences with that of the prophet of Nazareth, as to have given rise to the hasty conjecture that one must have helped to shape the other. It is hardly probable that there was any mutual influence between India and Palestine" (*The First Three*

Robertson,* a savant fully entitled to pass a judgment on questions of Hierology and Mythology, concluding his elaborate historico-comparative study of Krishnaism and Christism, remarks: "Christianity so-called, in short, we find to be wholly manufactured from pre-existent material within historic times: Krishnaism we have seen to have had a pre-historic existence. Thus every claim made in this connection by Christians recoils more or less forcibly on their own creed" (*Christianity and Mythology*, p. 276). What earthly or unearthly reason, then, is there that a special homage should be paid to Christianity? It is ignorance and ignorance alone that claims certain noble traits exclusively for Christian character which induces its votaries to assume an air of superiority over others. But a very slight acquaintance with non-Christian literatures, better non-Christian cultures, old and new, will dispel this illusion. The so-called Christian virtues are not peculiar, much less original to the Christian tradition. I wish the Bishop had read the history of the Greco-Roman world of that momentous epoch. "That the flesh should be coerced; that the things of this world are little in comparison with the world to come; that the inner intention is as important as the outward act; that the violent should not be resisted; that one ought to love one's enemies; that impurity is one of the worst sins; that God is alternately a merciful father and a fierce punisher; that humility has great merit; that repentance disarms the divine anger—these, and every other maxim that has been thought distinctive of the Christian message, were commonplaces of that old religious world and the most natural development of the religions of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia" (*The Sources*, p. 145), and Greece and India might have most fittingly been added to the list. It is on that score Father George Tyrrel, no mean authority and an orthodox Churchman into the bargain, has declared that "nothing is original in the righteousness preached by Jesus. All is to be found in the prophets, the psalmists, and the saints of the Jewish people, not to speak of the pagan moralists and saints" (*Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, p. 51). We know that from Alexandria to Rome hundreds of religious

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Gospels, p. 101). If not between India and Palestine, there was certainly between India and Alexandria, where the New Testament originated. We expected more light from the Grand Old Man of Unitarianism, at least in his 4th. Edition (1906), as both Maxmuller and Rhys Davids have been obliged to shed this obstinacy due to Christian bias. See *infra*, especially Chap. XI.

* Author of *A Short History of Free Thought, Pagan Christs, Christianity and Mythology, A Short History of Christianity, the Historical Jesus, the Jesus Problem* and a dozen other treatises.

enthusiasts as apostles were advocating those principles* with a view to preparing men for a future life, as the end of the present was near at hand—which peculiar doctrine the Jews learnt from the Mazdians, when somewhere in this cosmopolitan Greco-Syrian world Christianity arose with the stamp on its face of being an amalgam. How was it effected? We learn from history that not only an intermixture of nations but also a movement towards a syncretism of religions came in the wake of the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus. By Alexander's overthrow of the Persian Empire the current extended to the far west from India. "To the Perso-Babylonian mixture of religions there were added, not only the Syrian and Phrygian cults of Western Asia, but also the Jewish and Hellenistic beliefs and systems of thought as further elements of the conglomerate. Babylon, Seleucia, Antioch, Tarsus, Alexandria, and Rome, mark the stages in the progress of the movement. Various oriental cults had made their way to Rome during the last centuries of the republic" (*Pfleiderer's Primitive Christianity*, vol. III, p. 100). No wonder, Christianity is composite in character!

Harnack calls 'syncretism' of religions the internal condition of the expansion of Christianity. But he mentions some external conditions also, among which may be enumerated (1) Hellenising of the East and in part, of the West also; (2) the world-empire of Rome and the consequent political unity; (3) international commerce; (4) conviction of the essential unity of mankind produced, at any rate, intensified by "orbis Romanus" on the one side, and the development of Philosophy on the other, and confirmed by the enlightened system of Roman jurisprudence; (5) the transformation of ancient society into a democracy—gradual equalising effect of the noble doctrine of 'civis Romani' removing the bar between Greeks and barbarians; (6) the religious policy of Rome furthering the toleration of religious views opposed to one another; (7) the existence of religious associations, as well as of municipal and provincial organisations; (8) the irruptions of the Syrian and Persian religions into the Empire; and the decline of the exact sciences with the necessary resultant of an inveterate craving for some form of *revelation* and an insatiable thirst for miracles (Vide *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. vol. I, pp. 19-22). Dr. Carpenter describes the situation under which Christianity arose in the following

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* This explains the indications we find, both in the *Gospels* and the *Acts*, that Christianity had already been preached in those places which neither Christ nor his disciples ever visited.

terms: "Judaism, which surrounded the cradle of Christianity had been exposed to many influences. The position of Palestine between Egypt and Asia; the settlement of large numbers of people in Mesopotamia after the Captivity; the domination of successive powers—Persian, Greco-Syrian, Roman; the Jewish dispersion along the Mediterranean in Egypt, Asia minor, Greece and Italy—all brought new elements of thought since the days when Amos and Isaiah had proclaimed the great truths of ethical monotheism" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, pp. 17-18).

Claim and Truth.

It is a common partisan fallacy to compare the ideal of one faith with the actual of the rival. But theory for theory and practice for practice, has Christianity ever exhibited a better merit when compared with other religions that entitles it to a peremptory demand for homage from the latter? Here Christianity seems to be at a disadvantage on both the counts. Take the practical side, the theoretical aspect being reserved for detailed discussion later on. Leaving apart the sorry figure Christianity cut in the last world war, I illustrate my point from the beginning of the Christian faith. "As pointed out by its own Christian censors, the Byzantine town population of all orders was at least as worthless as that of pagan Rome in its worst imperial days. It realised," observes Mr. Robertson, "the ignorance and unprogressiveness of imperial China without the Chinese compensations of normal good nature, courtesy, domestic unity and patient toil" (*A Short History of Christianity*, p. 160). The good Bishop should think thrice before he sets out in any such ill-starred venture next time. But we must admit that the Christian mission in India is not beyond its hope of redemption. When the Christian Missionary sheds his characteristic bias, he too gets the true perspective to see the truth. Dr. Nicol Manicol in *The Making of Modern India* admits: "The West might have learnt more, and has yet much to learn, in this School [Vedanta], so ancient and so meditative......but if 'Graecia capta' conquered her spiritual conquerors [the Christians] and imposed upon them many of her modes of thought, so that they rule us to this hour, *we need not be surprised if a similar triumph should await captive India*" (As quoted in the *Modern Review*, p. 317, September, 1925). The italics are ours.

Original and Translation.

Before we go to show that the New Testament was almost wholly borrowed from older sayings and myths, the readers should be reminded, if at all necessary, that the Old Testament is in Hebrew (the Septuagint is in Greek) and the New Testament is in Greek. But we read the Bible in its English translation, though it is contended with some

force that the Syriac version of the New Testament is older than its Greek companion. Edwin A. Abbot in his *Fourfold Gospel* points out that the New Testament is full of instances of the meaning of terms taking a topsy-turvy turn by being translated from Hebrew or Aramaic to Greek or from Greek to modern languages. We shall also see that Dr. Benjamin Smith has given a new direction to Biblical criticism by introducing symbolical interpretation of the whole narrative, and he has based his interpretation mainly on *Mk.* 5^{27}, *Lk.* 24^{19}, *Acts* 18^{25}, and 28^{31}. There could be found many more such passages but for the havoc made by translators. "This similarity does not appears in English but it," says Rev. W. Wooding, "is clear enough in the Greek" (*Hibbert Journal*, 1911, p. 858).

The indebtedness of the New Testament to the Old, not only in ideas but in phraseology too, has been fully worked out in Raja Rammohun Roy's *Three Appeals to the Christian Public in Defence of the Precepts of Jesus*, especially in the Appendix and Postcript to the *Second Appeal* (Panini Office Edition, pp. 637—675). Rajarshi Rammohun, who was a pioneer in the field of Biblical criticism too, failed not to insist upon postponing the study of the New Testament which, with its misquotations and misinterpretations, gives a wrong bias about its contents—postponing "to acquire a knowledge of the true force of scriptural phrases and expressions" (p. 666.) from the study of the Old Testament when the Gospel story would wear quite a different complexion. He had pointed out about a century ago, long before the Revised Version of the Bible made the world acquainted with the woeful confusion that the New Testament writers had made by committing fatal mistakes in quoting from the Old, and that the English Version is full of "mistranslation" and "errors" (pp. 738, 760, 799, etc). Utterances attributed to Jesus are not free from that fault. Mr. C. G. Montefiore, an eminent sympathetic Jewish authority, affirms : "Jesus is made to quote as an injunction of the Law a statement which is not to be found there" (*The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 81). The form of the above quotation brings in another question, the question of the authenticity of a passage. Authenticity with those who believe in the historicity of Jesus means whether the idea came from Jesus, or was superadded later on. To those of the other camp, the question is whether it is an original text or an interpolation. The question is a natural one. "Of all the many thousand manuscript copies of the Bible in existence, it may safely be asserted", says F. G. Kenyon, D. Litt., Ph. D., Asst. Keeper of Mans., British Museum, writing on *Manuscripts*, "that no two are quite alike, and that none is wholly free from error." The reason is obvious.

Continues the same authority: "Before printing was invented, every copy of a book had to be separately written by hand and as those who have ever done much copying will know, by no possibility can the human hand and eye be kept from making mistakes. Mistakes, if not recognised, are perpetuated by later scribes; if recognised, they will often be wrongly corrected; so the circle of error goes on widening from generation to generation" (*The Criticism of the New Testament*). The function of textual criticism is to remove these errors. But, on the very face of it, the task of finding out the original is well-nigh impossible.

The next difficulty is about the exact meaning of the passage. Ambiguity of meaning is a fate that the gospels share with all other scriptures, the scriptural texts bearing dozens of meanings, as the existence of different schools of interpretation shows. Then, there is again the difficulty arising out of transcription. It is to be noted that our *Bhodhisat* became *Josaphat* of the Christian tradition by the displacement of a *point* in the script. Who knows that differences in pronunciation also lie not at the root of such a metamorphosis? Jesus, the name of Christ himself, has been changed beyond recognition in its meanderings from Hebrew to English. And those who have any idea how enormously the translations of the Bible differ one from the other, if they do not seriously jeopardise the sense—unfortunately in some cases the sense has been obliterated or obverted—would find the differences between the meanings of the original and the quotations, in some cases at least, extremely negligible for the purpose of deciding whether the passage is original or quite the reverse. What seems to be a difference may not be a difference of sentiment or idea, but merely that of language, only due to transcription or translation.

It has always been a source of perplexity to the believers in the historicity of Christ that the voluminous works of the Jewish historian Josephus of the first century, though they elaborately record many insignificant events, contain no unambiguous reference to Christian origins except certain clear interpolations. Eight such interpolatory passages are found in the newly discovered Slavonic or Russian translation of the *De Bello Judaico*. What most concerns us here is the astonishing reference to the Jewish authorities that they not only crucified Jesus but "crucified him *according to the ancestral law*." Critics take this, especially the last point, as egregiously absurd. The scholars set it down "to a gross blunder of the Slavonic translator from the Greek original which may have read "*contrary to the Law*" (Calcutta *Statesman*, 10-8-24 and 17-8-24). Day changed into night simply by an error in translation! And to err is human, they say. This is a fair warning to those

who stake their religious life on an historical fact, the historicity of which should be taken on trust, and the so-called eye-witnesses often differ as poles asunder in reporting or recording the same event. And again, the translator may make a mess of the records.

Here is an example which shows how prepossession gives misdirection to one's endeavours, however honest, to understand an actual historical situation. Mr. Rush Rhees is conscious that the silence of Josephus about Jesus is fatal when this historian has an appreciative notice of John the Baptist. Knowing John, the historian could not be unaware of the existence of Jesus, if the latter lived at all. This much is accepted by Mr. Rhees even. Therefore the reason this partisan Christian author gives for the omission is nothing but puerile. He remarks: "His appreciation of John suggests that he could not have mentioned Jesus more fully, [Rhees takes one interpolated clause as a genuine passage], without some approval of his life and teaching [This is a wholly biassed Christian view]. This would be a condemnation of his own people [not necessarily. Many Jewish authors have appreciated Jesus and at the same time justified the Jews from the Gospel records themselves], whom he desired to commend to Gentile regard; and he seems to have taken the cowardly course of silence concerning a matter more noteworthy, even for that generation, than much else of which he writes very fully." (*The Life of Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 22). Impudence cannot go farther. Before bringing the charge of cowardice —excellent illustration of Christian charity—it did not occur to this intellectual imbecile that there could be another very cogent argument for the silence, namely, there was no Jesus to mention. There is an early reference, no doubt, by the way only. James is introduced as the "brother of Jesus, who is called the Christ." Other passages were also introduced afterwards which, by the consensus of all opinions, are evident interpolations. Says H. G. Enelow, a sympathetic Jewish author believing in the historicity: "It is well known that one sentence on the subject in Josephus is universally considered a later interpolation, made no doubt by a Christian writer eager to remedy the obvious omission" (*A Jewish View of Jesus*, p. 135). He himself being ardently in search of farther historical light on Jesus regrets this non-mention of the name of Jesus "in the Talmudic portions of his time as well as in the Jewish Philosopher Philo in Alexandria and Josephus, who lived both in Palestine and Rome. They are well informed men of light and leading of the first century of the Christian era" (pp. 134—135). It is said that Buddhism has been driven out of India and nothing has been left here

of Buddha. Yet the Gautama of the 6th. century B C. remains in India as an Avatar, and the Hindu scriptures bear witness to the teachings of the Buddha, and the Jaina literature is replete with the reminiscences of the Master. References are many and diverse. The Jain contemporary historians were not afraid of registering the doings of one who was more than a match for their own Messiah, Mahavir. But how is it that there is absolutely no mention of the Christ in the contemporary Jewish literature of any description, scriptural or apocryphal, even in the contemporary historian who has recorded many insignificant incidents of Jewish life and who was fully acquainted with contemporary Jewish history, both in Palestine and at Rome? Josephus ran to Rome to release from prison some insignificant priests, but knew nothing of Jesus about whom all sorts of four or five possible and impossible *trials* have been related by the gossipping evangelists. The omission is unaccountable if Jesus really existed. Vide *infra* Chap. xx(d).

Buddha and Christ in History.

Take again the well-known verse, "Why callest thou me good"? Dr. W. B. Smith has pointed out that originally in Greek it meant "One is the Good though called by many names." First it passed from Greek into Aramaic and was then retranslated from Aramaic to Greek, and the result is this difference. (*Ecce Deus*, p. 196). In some cases retranslation has restored the original. In the controversy as to the original language in which was written *The Testaments of the XII Patriarchs*, the extant books being found only in Greek, Rev. Dr. Charles shows by linguistic criticism that "when we find, in the case of obscure or unintelligible passages, that the source of obscurity or unintelligibleness in the Greek becomes clear on translation into Hebrew, we may with certainty conclude that our Greek text is a translation from the Hebrew." (*Hibbert Journal*, April, 1905). In this way the pre-Christian origin of the book is established beyond all cavil and it makes havoc of the claim of the originality of certain gospel tenets. Sometimes the original passage was figurative, but a literal translation produced fatal consequences. "The dead brought to life" originally meant reconversion of a renegade (Dr. Schmiedel, *Gospels* p. 58, *E. B.*). The world has suffered from the literal translation. So, if an idea in the New Testament seems to be new, its seeming newness may not be due to the originality of the idea but to the process of borrowing, *i. e.*, it may owe its genesis to some defect or fault of the scribe or, more so, of the translator: as, for example, may be mentioned the parables, almost all of which have been traced to pre-Christian sources. In them there are differences with the sources. But that does not

make them at all original. The difference in some cases is due to the motive of abridgement or elaboration, or to the failure of the writer to understand the real import of the theme, or the alteration and modification were demanded by the changed environment, or it might have cropped up in transcription or translation as already pointed out. The differences can be detected only by a comparison with the original. And the original can not in all cases be discovered now, as the idea might have been communicated from mouth to mouth. In any case, however, inspite of differences, the borrowing cannot be seriously denied. The linguistic consideration cannot be lightly set aside, especially when the idea is transferred through altogether a foreign tongue. Broadly speaking, the transition is first from Hebrew or Aramaic to Greek and then from Greek to English, and the Bengali proverb says that three successive copyists would among themselves destroy the original altogether. So familiar a thing as "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you" of the earlier translation which easily bore a spiritual interpretation, has now been transformed into "the Kingdom of Heaven is in the midst of you" (Luke 17[20]). Even Dean Farrar has been obliged to accept this position, as the context does not allow the spiritual meaning. It is suggested that the original meaning might be "in your neighbourhood," thereby cutting the bottom from beneath the spiritual interpretation altogether. However, Otto Pfleiderer has shown by textual criticism that the passage is an interpolation inconsistent with what follows *(Primitive Christianity*, Vol. II, pp. 167, 405, etc.). "*For Jesus, the Reign of God is always an eschatological conception* and can only be spoken of as present, because the end is already drawing near" (Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 135). There cannot be a better refutation of the translation in the spiritual sense. That "in your neighbourhood" may be the real meaning is well attested by the fact that Jesus was here addressing not his disciples but the Pharisees, who failed to observe the *Kingdom*, it being a secret brotherhood. The spiritual meaning is a magnificent one when taken as an isolated fact unconnected with the context—for which Pfleiderer takes it to be an interpolation—"but contradicted scores of times in the New Testament" (Benjamin Smith, *Ecce Deus*, p. 81). As it is addressed to the Pharisees, M. Loisy explains the Kingdom of God to be "such that it might be realised in you if you desired and were worthy of it". This is exactly the way how we in the Brahma Samaj, a spiritual movement, have treated the Bible since the time of the great leader, Brahmananda Keshub Chandra Sen. It simply shows that with a little ingenuity any passage may be made to yield any meaning you bid for

Kingdom of God.

at the time. Loisy in the end, however, favours the meaning "in the midst of you" *(The Gospel and the Christ).* And not Loisy alone. All scholars worth the name, such as Meyer, Alford, Keim, Bengel, Thayer Moffat, Lewis, Plummer, Adeney, Ragg, Weiss, Burnside, Dummelow, Godet, including Farrar and Pfleiderer, have adopted this view, because Jesus' words could not be said in the spiritual sense, as he was addressing the Pharisees. However, Gerald Friedlander shows that the idea of the Kingdom of God in the spiritual sense was propounded by Josephus, Philo and other Jewish thinkers (*The Jewish Sources of the Sermon*, p. 139) and so could easily be incorporated in the gospels. And what a strange repetition of history! Some of our ardent Swarajists say, "Swaraj is within;" some say "already in your midst;" and some would combine the two and say "both". And those who know, know it full well that, circumstances being exactly the same, Jesus' *Kingdom* is the prototype of our Indian Swaraj. Spiritual growth, collective or individual, is a gradual process which can never be effected by a catastrophic change. But Jesus and his followers are found to have throughout laboured under the expectation of such a violent change that would put a stop to the old order. "That Jesus, however," says Dr. Bernhard Weiss, "represented his return as an event which was looked for during the current generation, is proved undoubtedly by the universal and, notwithstanding many disappointments, firmly cherished hope of the apostolic age" *(Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, p. 149 f. n.). Spiritual Kindom is of a quite different nature. Eminent authorities who work out their theories without any bias are almost unanimous on this point. Pfleiderer has pointed out that Jesus drew all his inspiration from such a conception. (Work quoted p. 401). In the opinion of J. Weiss also "the proclamation of the *coming* Kingdom is the normal, the sayings that speak of it as though it were present are exceptional" (Ibid). We cite one more authority only. Gustaf Dalman whose orthodoxy is unimpeachable and to whom a reference has already been made in this connection (p. 12) takes "the *Sovereignty of God* for Jesus" as "an eschatological entity" (*The Words of Jesus*, p. 135). But Dr. F. Godet, though admitting in a way that the Kingdom as conceived by Jesus is to come dogmatically complains: "It is a troublesome error committed by the excellent Meyer and those that follow him, invariably to give to this term an eschatological sense" (*Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 193). This shows that the Bible is interpreted according to the interpreter's own predilection and fancy, and that it is hopeless to extract any history out of it. So, if "the whole religious position

of the Christian depends ultimately upon whether the facts of the Gospel story can be guaranteed" as held by W. W. Holdsworth in his *Gospel Origins*, p. 187, then Christianity is in a very bad predicament.

It is absolutely impossible that the Gospel story would be guaranteed in such a vital point as the *virgin birth*. It is unwarranted not as a fact only, but the textual criticism shows that the idea had its start from an Isaiah text misunderstood and mistranslated: "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Harnack and others are only showing to-day that the word conveying the idea of *a virgin* was an original mistranslation in Greek from Hebrew, but Rajarshi Rammohan showed more than a century ago (1823) that the *future tense* in the translation was a mistake and it could in no wise be interpreted to mean the mother of a future Messiah, *i.e.* Jesus (Vide Work cited, pp. 643-45, and 765-67). The Rajarshi contends from the history and from the context that the verse has an immediate reference to Hezekiah, the King of Judah who saved Jerusalem from the yoke of the Assyrian King Sennacherib, and prior and subsequent to whose reign "was none like him among all the Kings of Judah" (2 *Kings* 18^{3-7}). From the passage it is quite evident that all the choicest epithets such as *Immanuel* etc., now wrongly appropriated by Jesus, was freely and most fittingly bestowed on Hezekiah as the deliverer of Israel and the King of the Jews (p. 773). Then again Rammohan observes: "We find in the original Hebrew [word] signifying "the virgin," which, if not referred to a particular person before mentioned, implies, in the figurative language of the Scripture, either a city, or the people of a city" (p. 766). The Raja translates the verse in the following way: "Behold, the virgin (the city of Jerusalem, or the nation) is pregnant, and is bearing a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The orthodox opponents egregiously failed to meet the Raja whose charge of literary dishonesty against the orthodox divines still holds true. He concludes: "Unless orthodox authors changed "the virgin" into "a virgin," and "conceived" into "shall conceive," they could not apply the verse in a direct sense to Mary, the mother of Christ, and to Christ himself; and consequently, to suit their convenience, they have entirely disregarded the original scripture, the context and the historical facts" (p. 767). But what led those to the task who set the ball rolling by manufacturing the fable of virgin birth in the gospels? Why, ignorance, stark ignorance even of the Hebrew language wholly relying on the mistranslated Greek Septuagint. And this charge of ignorance is not an invention of ours. In discussing the derivation

of the term *Iscariot*, Dalman finds it "unintelligible to the gospel writer himself" (Work cited, pp. 41, 42). This much then, for the guarantee of the facts of the Gospel story !

Inner Light and Scholarship.

The Upanishad tells us : नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यः न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन—"This Self can not be obtained by teaching the Vedas, nor by intellect, nor by a great knowledge of the scriptures" (Tattvabhushan's translation of *Mundaka:* 3-2-3). If the text refers to one's personal religion, this is not the occasion to speak for or against the doctrine whether scriptural studies are any aid or no. But when the task is to determine whether the teachings are from a historical person and not their intrinsic merit, then what is the method to be followed in coming to a right decision ? In the case of the Bible we can not take the tradition on trust, because here "we are on ground where," says Dr. George Salmon, F. R. S., "we have no authentic history to guide us ; for the earliest uninspired Church writers are far too late to have had personal knowledge of the publication of the Gospels, and such traditions as they have preserved are extremely scanty, and not always to be implicitly relied on" (*Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 116.) It is not unoften urged that scriptures should be explained with the help of the "inner light." If you want to derive from them what is technically called *spiritual food*, you are quite at liberty to do so. But the question of historicity can not be decided in this way. Dr. Burkitt in the Introductory Letter to the *Mountain Pathways* of Hector Waylen, by way of protest, remarks : "The inner light is not enough by itself ; it is necessary to take some account of the work of those who study the Gospel from the purely Historical and external point of view." Because the inner light of every different individual tends to make a moving picture of the Gospel, as we shall see in the sequel, whereas the past is unchangeable, it only disappears from our view. Every element of the buried world brought to light by historical criticism is permanent and has an objective value for all. This point can not be too much and too often insisted upon. Though the four gospels were chosen at random out of a heap, the Christian origins remain enshrouded in a dark mist. "However much we may regret that we have so little certain knowledge regarding the first beginnings of Christianity, the fact itself can hardly be disputed" (*Primitive Christianity*, vol I., p. 1.),—with plaintive words such as these indicative of a pessimistic mood, Dr. Otto Pfleiderer, Professor of practical theology in the University of Berlin commences his most comprehensive but avowedly non-polemical investigation. After a life-time spent in search of the Moral Teacher whom Liberal Christianity throughout the world

including the Unitarian Church is trying to defend by hook or by crook, the Professor gave up all hope to reach "the simple human grandeur of the Founder of our religion, the ideal of a lofty and noble religious hero, worthy of the veneration of the mind and the heart of the modern world" (as quoted in the *Hibbert Journal*, p. 352, 1911). Of course, the god of the early and medieval Christianity is a quite different thing altogether—Christ as the Son of God, as conqueror of Satan, as a wonderworker, as conqueror of Death and the Lifegiver, as King of kings and Lord of lords. Him all *Puranas* and myths give you. But further investigation has laid the axe to the root of this misguided endeavour. Signs are not wanting that the days of the struggle after manufacturing a human Jesus out of the materials supplied by the gospels and Epistles are numbered. Observes Dr. Neville Figgis: "The half way house of German liberalism is built on sands, the storm of the apocalyptic problem is shaking it in pieces" (*Civilization at the Cross-Roads*, p. 146).

So, 'pompous nullity' is the only category under which all attempts to find a historical Jesus from the gospels could properly be classified. And the futility of any such research is well realised from the peculiar mentality of Christian theologians. While reading the booklet, *Studies in Mark's Gospel* by A. T. Robertson, we were struck by the inscrutability of human psychology. There is no lack of honest endeavour to appraise the historical value of the gospels and consequently the author has not failed to point out interpolations right and left, yet he would not abrogate a jot or tittle from the figure of Christ which he formed with the help of these interpolations. The Gospel is reduced to its tenth part, but the figure delineated by the gospels remains intact.

CHAPTER II.

GOSPEL THEOLOGY
a Fatherhood of God

Miss May Sinclair in her *Defence of Idealism* (p. 278) has truly said that "to the very last Jehova [Yahweh] retained some of the old ways of the tribal deity. He was a struggling and a battling God, full of mercy when he got his own way and of vengeance when he did not."* The metaphysical conception of the Absolute was never made its own by the Hebrew mind. Was not Spinoza persecuted for developing a sense for the Absolute? But this idea of a mere outside God is not the idea of the Old Testament only, but of the gospels also. Because "until controversy with polytheism began, there is no sign that Christianity ever claimed to be a new message as to the nature of God. The God of Jesus and of his disciples is identical with the God of the Jews" (*The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. I, p. 402). This is what we have from two distinguished Christian scholars and theologians of England, Dr. Foakes Jackson and Dr. Kirsopp Lake. With it may be collated the opinion of a great American scholar, perhaps one most learned and impartial among the historians of religion now living, we mean George Foat Moore. He observes that Jesus "had no doctrine about God's nature and character that would have been unfamiliar to a well instructed Jew of his time" (*History of Religions*, vol. II, p. 114). But the author of the famous Psalm 139 seems to have risen above the limitations of the prevailing conception when he pours himself forth in this philosophic strain: "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandeth my thought afar off. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." The suggestion of an all encompassing presence of God which we find in this Psalm one will search in vain in Jesus. He is confined to God as related to man; the idea seems never to have occurred to him that God is also to be approached as *Brahman* as He is in Himself, far less anything like the Hindu Yogi's conception of total absorbtion in the Universal ever crossed his mind. But they argue, what is Jesus' *forte* is the Fatherhood of God? Yet, before parading with such flourish Jesus' belief in God the Father, it has never come in the way of the Christian theologians to tell us precisely what there is in the gospel teachings that throws in the shade

Yahwehism and Christism.

all earlier conceptions. It is therefore presented even today with such an assurance as if it were a new and unheard-of conception of God possible only to an unsurpassable religious genius. Christian authors in their blissful ignorance of and blindness to outside literature and history of religious development, especially Jewish to which we, for the present, mainly confine our study, have indulged in hyperboles while referring to the position of Christianity among the world religions, particularly in speaking of Christ's originality as to the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man without which this claim of high status on behalf of Christianity can not in the least be substantiated, and which, in the light of historic research impartially carried out for the love of truth—not a Christian virtue at least in the field of historical research—at enormous sacrifice and at the risk of persecution at the hands of Christian zealots, has been demonstrated to be wholly unfounded. It is a fools' paradise that has been mercilessly demolished by subsequent comparative studies. Dr. Hastings Rashdall is one of many such misguided panegyrists. We are now fully convinced that it was rash on the part of this Oxford Lecturer to tell his audience what we cull at random from his *Philosophy and Religion* (p. 153): "Christianity alone of the historical religions teaches those great truths to which we have been conducted by a mere appeal to Reason and to Conscience (?). It teaches ethical Monotheism (?). It is the Religion that teaches the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man (?). And these truths were taught by the historical Jesus. No one up to his time had ever taught them with equal clearness and in equal purity." We now know that the gospel-Jesus borrowed the ideas from others and we undertake to show that his ideas were not free from those most objectionable impurities which are natural to primitive men. Is not the idea of fatherhood as old as the Rigveda? Did not the Rishi approach his God and rely on Him—त्वम् हि पिता, त्वम् माता—not only as "Thou art father" but "thou mother" (R. V., VIII. 87. 11), also as सखा, पिता, पितृतमः पितृणाम्—"Thou art our friend, our father, the most fatherly of fathers" (R. V., IV. 17. 17)? The Rishi did not approach his God in a dry emotionless mood, but in the exuberance of feelings he exceeded the category of father and was in search of some higher epithet. That is the significance of पितृतमः पितृणाम्। Mere *father* did not satisfy his heart. Did he not pray—पिता नोऽसि पिता नो बोधि—"Thou art our father and as father, teach us wisdom" (Yayur. V., 37·20)—a prayer tuned to a highter key than the Lord's Prayer.* Verily, the idea

The Concept pre-Christian.

* We shall deal with the Prayer at length afterwards. But, for the present,

of God the father is common to all religions. The Greek prayed to "Father Zeus" and the German to "All Father Odin." Plato in *Timaeus* (28c) calls God the "father and maker of the universe." Was there not a corresponding sentiment in their minds ? A term of this nature cannot be coined if not backed by an adequate idea. Did not Pindar pray : "With thee, O Father Zeus, is the fulfilment of all deeds" (As translated by James Adam in *The Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 122) ? By the way, is there any thing higher in the whole range of the New Testament theology ? The Christian claim against the evidence of history and of common sense is unpsychological also. And quite a wet blanket is thrown over this misguided Christian enthusiasm by R. Herford. "When it was first used," pertinently observes this Hebrew scholar, "there is no evidence to show ; but the reason why it came into use was surely that it served to express the personal relation of God to man more truly than any other term. Those who first used it did so presumably because their own religious experience made them feel the need of some term that would do this ; so well did it serve its purpose that Jesus, when he came, made no change and suggested no improvement." (*The Pharisees*, pp. 151-152). The same authority points out that if it had been an innovation Jesus would have been forthwith resisted, because he had not to preach in a vacuum. Such a staunch advocate of the glory of Christ, Dr. J. E. Carpenter, is exactly of the same opinion : "The language of Jesus, then, is the accustomed language of his age ; he stands on the great inheritance of national ideas. He uses everywhere the modes of religious utterance which the Scripture and the Synagogue set upon his lips. He builds upon the moral life which they have organised." A little further on the Grand Old Minister of the Unitarian Church continues : "He takes for granted a sense of personal relationship to God. He is conscious, that is to say, of an essential identity of religious experience between his hearers and himself" (*Studies in Theology*, pp. 245-246). It is only blindness originating in theological prejudice that shuts men's eyes to such stern facts. The God Mithra was called "Father Mithra" and the

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suffice it to say that it does not contribute much to the sustenance of any the very high order of religious aspiration. On the contrary, that man's power of forgiveness is the measure of God's is really abhorrent to all fine spiritual susceptibilities. The height of the New Testament God-conception will be measured as we proceed. In the meantime we invite attention of the critical student to the scholarly articles on the Lord's Prayer in the *Vedic Magazine* of April and May, 1925, by Mr. Moheschandra Ghosh Vedantaratna.

God Attis called *Papa.* In the Mithraic hierarchy the chief priest was "Father of Fathers" and from this perhaps the title of Pope came into vogue (*S. H. C*, p. 175). Long before Jesus the Jews were praying to a loving father, as they advanced to replace their stern tribal God by a beneficent Deity and that is the process of evolution in all lands. Wendt, in his *System der Christlichen Lehre*, counts no less than 23 passages in the Old Testament (*W. H. J.*, p. 263) in which God is conceived as father exactly in the same way as we find in the gospels: "Doubtless thou art our father....thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer" (*Isaiah*, 63[16] : 64[7]). Lightfoot remarks: "This epithet of God ('The Father who is in Heaven') was very well known among the Jews and very usual with them. They were thoroughly instructed from their cradles to call 'God the Father in Heaven' " (As quoted from *Horae Hebraicae* by Gerald Friedlander in p. 134 of his *Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount*). "Our Father who art in Heaven, also occurs in the Jewish liturgy" (*Ibid*). A vigorous search was made as to the origin of this expression and the result arrived at has been most damaging. Some say that finding it "a characteristically Jewish designation" (Hastings' *Dictionary of Bible*, Vol. V. p. 35) the *Sources* of the second and third Gospels suppressed it. Others hold that this was not a characteristic of Jesus' address, but as Matthew wrote especially for the Jewry he was instrumental in introducing it in imitation of the Jewish liturgy.

In both the cases the claim of originality falls to the ground. Here then we are confronted by a dilemma. If it is conceded that Jesus' habitual address was "Father", then the cry on the cross must be a forgery, because such a supposedly spontaneous utterance begins with "my God" and not "my father". If the utterance be genuine, the address "my father" can not be characteristic of Jesus ; therefore it has not at all been presumptuous on the part of Gerald Friedlander to remonstrate : "We deny that the fatherhood of God is expounded by Jesus with more depth and intensity than by the great prophets and teachers of Israel who lived before the age of Jesus" (Work quoted pp. 126-127). The David of *Chronicles* exclaims : "Blessed be thou, Yahweh, God of Israel, our father, for ever and ever" (Montefiore, *The Old Testament and After*, p. 104). Instances need not be multiplied. But I must cite the estimable opinion of the authors of the *Beginnings of Christianity* (p. 401) : The Fatherhood of God is a characteristically Jewish doctrine found in equal abundance in the Old Testament and in Rabbinic literature". This has seemed *a little* exaggeration to Mr. Montefiore as far as the Old Testament is concerned and that a *little* only. This is

due, no doubt, to his partiality for the evolution *After* the Old Testament. Otherwise the authority quoted has shown that "this Fatherhood of God is not represented in Mark and in Q as characteristic of the teaching of Jesus and of the apostles".

b. Idea of God in General

However, Wendt claims for Christianity that the belief was never, "conceived with such confidence and plainness, such power and exclusiveness, as here, and never brought into such definite relation to the personal life" which has been very humorously characterised by R. Grützmacher, in his *Rückschritt* as "statements, which, apart from their really great modesty as a description of something new and epoch-making which Christianity is supposed to have introduced into the religious history of mankind, are not capable of proof" (as quoted in the *Witnessess*). Now, there is another claim. God was brought by Jesus to a very intimate relation with us even in our daily humdrum life. The claim would be forthwith contested by Herford by pointing out that "the Rabbis insisted no less emphatically upon the nearness of (God" (*Pharisees*, 151). The claim is : Did not Jesus say "not a sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father", and "the very hairs of your head are all numbered ?" But with the father *residing in Heaven* the idea of the intimate relation reduces itself to a myth in the case of Jesus. Yet the Old Testament is not without its witness as to that very intimate relationship.

But before dealing with the Jewish Scripture we would like to draw upon a Gentile source. As regards God's nearness to man, Seneca, we presume, can scarcely be improved upon. Says the stoic sage : "God comes to man, yea, He comes closer still, He enters into man. Nothing is hidden from God, He is present in our hearts. He enters into our inmost thoughts. Between the good man and God there subsists a friendship founded on virtue, nay, more than a friendship, a relationship and likeness. Since indeed the good man, differing from God only in regard to time (as being non-eternal) is his pupil, and imitator, and true offspring whom that exalted Father educates, like a true Father, some what sternly. God cherishes a fatherly feeling towards the good, and loves mankind ; amid troubles, pains and evils He bids them win strength". (as translated by Pfleiderer in *Primitive Christianity*, vol. I, pp. 52-54). It would be sheer impudence to go to pit any Biblical saying, canonical or apocryphal * against this moderate expression of stoic sublimity.

Seneca's Conception far loftier

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* Here a reference may profitably be made to *The Apocryphal New Testament*

However, the following is found in the book of Job as well : "Doth not He see my ways and count all my steps ?" The Talmud too is as clear : "Without the will of God no bird falls from heaven ;" "how much the less shall danger threaten a man's life, unless the creator himself make it ?" "Do I not number every hair of every creature ?" "No man strikes here below with his finger but it is known above." The already quoted Psalm 139 should give a quietus to the claim : "Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." Can God's fatherhood be better expressed than in the following verse : "As a father pities his children, so God pities them that fear Him" (*The Old Testament and After*, p. 135). The plea of originality fails. But, in spite of the claim of "plainness" "exclusiveness" and "intimate relation" as already referred to, one does

God's Intimacy with man not a Christian idea.

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translated by M. R. James, Provost of Eton. It consists of many books as the New Testament itself. Dr. James point out that a number of them go as back as the middle of se.cnd century, by which time the New Testament hid not assumed its final form. Some were actually used in churches and had a fair chance of recognition unless the selection were arbitrarily made on the basis of the whims and fancies of the then church-men. And the choice was evidently made from a congeries of books current at the time and adopted for religious purposes. If the churches were to make a fresh selection, who knows that the table would not be turned in favour of the apocryphal ones ? Such an excellent churchman as M. Loisy chooses only a few passages from the gospels as true which too others have demolished. It was an accident that the present gospels survived as authoritative. In reality all were equally factual or fictitious. "We are definitely told" says Dr. James, "that the First Epistle [of Clement of Rome, now apocryphal] was read in many churches" (p. xvii). Whereas originally the second gospel was not very cordially received, as Theodor Zahn informs us : "It is clear from the words of John as well as from the explanation which Papias adds, that unfavourable opinions had been expressed concerning Mark's book in the circle to which Papias and John be'onged" (*Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. II, p. 439) The present gospels can not be given greater credit over the so-called apocryphal books except on the absurd ground that the selectors were inspired men endowed with intuitive power to know fact from fiction. Says van Eysinga : "None of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament was canonical to begin with ; they only slowly became so, often only after much controversy" (*Radical Views, p. 86*). On the other hand, the authorship of the gospels was foisted on some known persons, and interpolations made to fit in with the personality, supposed or real. Even in the 3rd century no fixity was to be found in this respect. "Amelius, writing by order of Plotinus against the Gnostics, quotes from the prologue of the Fourth Gospel, the author of which he designates (without disrespect) as the barbarian', Eusebius" (Inge's *Plotinus*, vol. I, p. 64).

not find in Jesus any direction for as deep a relationship between man and God as our *Yoga Sastras* show us the way to. Yet it is on this score that Jesus' theology is held up before us. Moreover, Jesus' idea of God which will be made more and more manifest by an analysis of the parables, the mould into which quite a section of Jesuine teachings is thrown, has been so vitiated by his belief in a rival of God that one wonders whether or not Satan holds a greater sway over man's destiny. The world is sharply divided into sheep and goats. All are not children of God. A large portion is to be sent into the eternal hell-fire as most men are but children of the devil. Jesus says: "Ye are of your father the devil" (Jn. 8^{44}). Only a limited number will find their resting place in Heaven as "strait the way which leads to life: few they be that find it." (Matt. 7^{14}). So, not-withstanding His alleged intimate and loving relation with man, the Jewish God's old Yahwehist character seems here in the Christian dispensation to assert itself with renewed vigour. And the nature of this intimacy is rather shallow for any the very deep spiritual purpose. But we are not entitled to expect better. When great things are hidden from the wise and revealed to babes (Matt. 11^{25}), the *littleness* of these great things must be patent. "Here (*i.e.* in the relation between God and man) again, however, Jesus's view is, in the main, the ordinary common-sense view,—" observes Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan in his *Hindu Theism*, "that of a finite spirit, independent of and apart from the Divine Spirit......Jesus, however, does not seem to think that in our ordinary uprising and downsitting, in our knowing, feeling and willing, there is any direct hand of God." Pandit Tattvabhushan, his partiality for Christianity notwithstanding, adds: "On the contrary, he [Jesus] speaks distinctly of an Evil Spirit, the Devil, who possesses great power over man, who makes him rebel against God and" may, "at the end lead him to everlasting punishment." (p. 136). Glad tidings indeed!

God limited by Satan.

Can, under the circumstances, the Jesuine theology be called monotheistic in the proper sense of the term? Not only "in the view of Jesus over against the Rule of God is the Rule of the Adversary, the Satan (Matt. 12^{26} ff.)", but "out of the abyss swarm hosts of spirits, emissaries of evil, to inflict disease on helpless sufferers. Beneath the earth," continues Dr. Estlin Carpenter, "is the dread region of Gehenna where the "cursed" are condemned to "aeonian" fire in the society of the devil and his angels" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 31). Moreover, this doctrine of eternal damnation, unbearable as it is even for human love as

Theology not Monotheistic.

was evidenced in the case of Charles Voysey, is irreconcilable to the idea of a "loving Father." Any one having personal contact with God would instinctively recoil from associating this idea with the divine nature. So it has been a hard nut to crack for all pious and thoughtful Christians throughout the ages. But to their God and His Christ it is not hard ! So the Christian claim of Jesus' intimacy with God turns out to be a myth. On the other hand, the monotheistic and spiritual character of Christianity, at least at its source, is assailed on another ground. The same authority has the following : "The Book of Jubiles, shortly before our era, conceived the operations of nature to be carried on by spirits of winds and clouds, thunder and lightning, cold and heat. There were spirits of winter and spring, of summer and autumn, and of all creatures in earth and sky" (Ibid p. 27). And Jesus passed over these fantasies without protest. And if the source is polluted the current can not remain pure. Yet the Old Testament tradition is monotheistic. Unfortunately the gospels were not written in this atmosphere. It was a heathen amalgam from the beginning. "We discern now that the Mediterranean polytheism" observes Lewis Richard Farnell in his Gifford Lectures delivered in St. Andrews (1924-25) "was never permanently overthrown and that many of its fibres survive in the soil of our orthodox Christianity" (*The Attributes of God*, p. 100). So the Old Testament was given a go-by so much so that even today the monotheistic claim can not be put forward except by Unitarian Christianity. "The majority of earnest Christians", says the same authority, "have always addressed their prayers primarily to God and to Christ as two distinct personages" (p. 9. 99), not to speak of the Virgin and a host of Saints giving the thing an appearance of idolatry. Even at present Christianity is adjudged to be so. "The popular religion of Christendom, except within the shrinking borders of Puritan Protestantism", Farnell insists, "must to-day be called idolatrous" (p. 36). Now, when Christians presume to pose as champions of spiritual religion and speak patronisingly of Indian movements against idolatry and polytheism as inspired by their Christ (Vide *Dnanodoya* of Bombay, quoted by the *Indian Messenger*, 1926, p. 163) they should forthwith be reminded of the popular adage : "Physician, heal thyself". How can spiritual worship of One God be established without removing these obstacles from the path. At the time of Jesus the Temple services were almost idolatrous, as will be shown afterwards. No man with the least prophetic fervour in him could tolerate them. Rajarshi Rammohan in India began by protesting against such abuses. Jesus has been made intolerant of human frailties, at least, of those of

his opponents, as is usual in a party strife. But this omission by the gospels of any allusion to these blemishes is fatal to any right appraisement of the historical background of the whole affair. It clothes the gospel narrative with the garb of fiction and the historicity becomes a camouflage.

It will not be out of place here to consult another Christian savant of great eminence as to what position the Biblical theology taken by itself occupies, and what relative position when compared with Hinduism. Professor William James in his *Pluralistic Universe (Hibbert Lectures)* points out in plain and unvarnished language : "The theological machinery that spoke so livingly to our ancestors with its finite age of the world, its creation out of nothing.... its treatment of God as an external contrivance.... sounds as odd to most of us as if it were some outlandish savage religion" (pp. 28-29). And comparing the Christian scheme with the Hindu, he disposes of the former as "the product of childish fancy" and assures his audience that most learned people would "side with Hinduism in this matter." Why so ? Because "God as intimate soul and reason of the universe has always seemed to some people a more worthy conception than God as external creator." And the Biblical teachings scarcely, if ever, rise above the conception of an external God. But, we are told, the study of the Bible "will bring spiritual enlightenment to India" (C. F. M.* in *Modern Review* May, 1924).

Prof. James' estimate of Hinduism and Christianity

In shamelessness such an advertisement is hard to beat.

c. Love of God.

To seek God for His own sake is a thing conspicuous by its absence in the Gospel theology. Man seeks God, no doubt, but to serve some purpose of his own. That God's company is in itself an enjoyable thing is an idea you search in vain in the gospels. If you come to God you must come as a beggar and if you do anything *noble* you do it for reward. We reserve the discussion of the ethical side of the question for the next chapter. But the theological aspect is not less important. In the gospels man is so much absorbed in his grosser nature that he has no inclination, nor is he taught, to cultivate the acquaintance of God the Beautiful, yet in Plato Beauty is one of the essential attributes of God, as Farnell points out. The religion of salvation

* Centenary Forward Movement, for the matter of that, the whole Christian Mission. I have treated it actually as a representative of the orthodox Christian standpoint.

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through *deus ex machina* offers little opportunity for the growth and development of such a refined sentiment. There is no room for unmotivated love—*ahetuki prema*—as we find it in the *rasa-tattva* of our Vaishnava system which has given expression to it in five different modes. Christianity has much to learn yet from Vaisnavism in that respect. "The Christian's love to God," remarks Dr. Brajendranath Seal, "is summed up in Sonship, occasionally varied by the attitude of a servant or a friend. Compared with this, the range and depth of the Vaishnava sentiment must be confessed to be a revelation of the divine possibilities of human love. The Vaishnava Sakhya and Madhurya, and the species of Bhakti taught by Narada must come as a new gospel of love to every devout Christian Soul" (*Vaishnavism and Christianity*, p. xi). Ransack the whole of the New Testament and you will never find anything approaching the following : "Celestial love is the line of communication which enables man to share the life of God" as Dr. Whitchurch summarises the teachings of Plato on love in *Phaedrus*, 253A (Vide *Cornell's Studies*, No. 14, p. 56). Says the poet-philosopher when speaking on love : "And they have the less difficulty in finding the nature of their own God in themselves, because they have been compelled to gaze intensely on him, their recollection clings to him, and they become possessed by him, and receives his character and ways as far as man can participate in God. These they attribute to the beloved, and they love him all the more." But the idea is a commonplace in Hindu Scriptures.

There is no gainsaying the fact that love of God is expatiated upon in the gospels, but the idea has a very superficial hold on the mind of their hero. It has become almost meaningless when applied to the practical life. Jesus works upon the imagination of men more by *fear* than by *love* of God. As our Rishi of Taittiriya Upanishad, though he had moments of discursive flight to the Blissful (आनन्दं ब्रह्म), was more constantly and vitally concerned with Food (अन्नं ब्रह्म). So, in spite of his occasional excursion into the other aspect, Jesus' idea of God was not far removed from the primitive man's conception of a malevolent power always bent upon seizing his victim. Says Paul Wernle of the university of Basel : "Jesus laid the greatest emphasis on the fear of God, for our Father is the Lord of heaven and earth and judge of every evil word, who can condemn body and soul to hell. In forbidding men to judge ; in bidding them have no fear of men ; in his parable of the talents, Jesus reveals a fear of God such as no Old Testament saint expressed more strongly. The fear of God is always the foundation on which those features of Divine character, which inspire confidence and trust as to a friend, are

built up. Where there is no fear, there Jesus' faith in God exists not." (*The Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 83). And Professor Wernle believes in Jesus as "Our Saviour." Was not man's earliest notion of God framed in terms of fear ? Yes, but to teach this God should not have been requisitioned to come down from *heaven*. Sufficient unto the world was the evil thereof. And with this fresh inroad of the savage God untold sufferings entered the world in the shape of Crusades, Inquisitions and Bartholomew massacres* God is fear and the savage approaches his God with propitiatory and thanksgiving offerings. By no stretch of imagination the savage's sacrificial 'pit' can be distinguished from the Temple of the much talked-of monotheistic God "demanding at the hands of his chosen people a perpetual service of bloodshed and burnt offering" (Whittaker, *Origins of Christianity*, p. 9), whereunto Jesus failed not to send his disciples with their gifts. And missionary gentlemen would father this teacher on us as "the Saviour of mankind" (C. F. M. in M. R., July, 1923). We are naturally prompted to pray, Lord, save us from 'our' saviour.

So far we have been able to refute the vain boast of Christian theologians that the doctrine of faith was a Christian monopoly. As far as the claim is justifiable it must be admitted that the doctrine is obviously a direct development from Judaism, but, as the above discussion shows, not based on a very exalted idea of Godhood. Curiously enough these theologians scent even in the Gita an imitation of the gospels. Mr. Robertson has given a quietus by saying. "Be the Gita pre-Christian or post-Christian, it is unmixedly Hindu" (C. M. p. 264). Max Muller also from the Śvetaśvata text : "यस्य देवे परा भक्तिः यथा देवे तथा गुरौ" (*i.e.*, who cherishes reverence for God as well as for preceptor), concludes : "we have in the Upanishads the idea of *bhakti* or devotion clearly

* "That religious persecution is a greater evil than any other, is apparent, not so much from the enormous and almost incredible number of its own victims, as from the fact unknown must be more numerous."

"In 1546, the Venetian Ambassador at the Court of the Emperor Charles V stated in an official report to his own government on his return home, "that in Holland and Friesland more than 30,000 persons have suffered death at the hand of justice for Anabaptist errors"

"In Spain, the Inquisition during the eighteen years of Torquemada's ministry, punished, according to the lowest estimate, upwards of 105,000 persons, of whom 8800 were burned."

"In Andalusia alone during a single year, the Inquisition put to death 2000 Jews, besides 17,000 who underwent some form of punishment less severe than that of the stake". Buckle's *History of Civilisation* (the World's Classics Series) vol. I, p. 145. More in the sequel.

pronounced" and, as the date of the Upanishad can not be certainly fixed, he too emphatically flouts the idea of any Christian influence (*Natural Religion*, p. 99). But I must refer to one whose verdict would at once carry conviction, as Dr. Brajendranath Seal in *Vaishnavism and Christianity* has acknowledged the influence of Christianity on the development of latter-day Vaishnavism. But he has most laboriously searched out texts and conclusively proved from them that *bhakti dharma* has had an independent origin and natural growth in the Indian soil since the Vedic times.

Of course, the later development *i.e.*, 'God is love', expresses a very noble and exalting sentiment. But if this isolated idea about God can be entertained in spite of His subjecting the majority of mankind to the torture of eternal hell-fire, then it can not be held to be an improvement upon the Old Testament Yahweh of Israel, revengeful as He is. Because I do not see, except for a change of phraseology, that the conception of loving God as given in Psalm 145 is less noble : "The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and of great loving kindness. The Lord is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works. The Lord is righteous in all His ways and loving in all His works." The term righteousness combines in itself both the ideas of justice and mercy, for the reconciliation of which a *deus ex machina* was not needed here as in Christianity. We also are naturally praying these long past thousand years without noticing any inconguity in the prayer :

रुद्र, यत्ते दक्षिणं मुखं तेन मां पाहि नित्यम्।

CHAPTER III.

GOSPEL MORALS

a. Is Jesus an Exemplar ?

Fatherhood not the last word

Christian theologians and their name is legion, have abjectly failed, we have seen, to establish that the theology of the New Testament is at all new, because the idea of the fatherhood of God, their slogan, is as old as the Vedas. Yet the fatherhood of God cannot be said to be the last word in our relation with the Deity. Prof. Schmiedel, who, from a critical as opposed to dogmatic standpoint, has done more for establishing the historicity of Jesus than any other single person, urges in *Jesus or Christ** : "We must carefully guard ourselves from attaching a too unqualified value to this conception. We ought not to forget that it is only an image, and that this image does not express everything that we are compelled to include in our thought of God. Not only philosophical reflection, but religious feeling also demands," gives this Zurich Doctor of Theology a bit of his spiritual experience, "that, in our mode of representing God, his exaltation over all created things should count for as much as his fatherly disposition." Here the Swiss critic has come almost up to the level of the Rishi's intuition as embodied in the Upanishadic text "पिता अपिता भवति माता अमाता ।" However, highly one may think it fit to belaud the idea of God the father, it is at best a partial phase of sexual anthropomorphism as distinguished from God the mother which should in no wise be considered a less noble idea. Indeed, this masculine God is *man-made* as opposed to *woman-made* one. And Christianity can not claim any credit here as it has failed to keep out the Goddess-worship like Judaism and Islam. Zarathustra also condemned the idea though the later Magi fell away from it (Vide Dr. James Hope Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 413). Moreover, too much emphasis on such one-sided sexual anthropomorphism is a stumbling block in the way of a higher conception of God. It is therefore only in the higher Hinduism that we get the idea of God as pure spirit which

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* The Rev. R. Roberts asked in the *Hibbert Journal* whether the Gospel-Jesus could consistently be called the Christ and the editor invited elucidation. A score of eminent theologians took part in the discussion which resulted in the *Hibbert Journal Supplement*, 1919, a big volume, *Jesus or Christ* ?

inculcates : न स्त्री न पुमानेषः न चैवायं नपुंसकः । "It is not woman, it is not man, nor is it neuter." (Max-Muller's translation of *S'vetaśvatara Upanishad*, 5[11]). Even in the conceptions of the varieties of the relationship and in their realisation in practical life the Hindu is so far advanced that his Christian compeer could learn at his feet for centuries (*Vide Dr. Seal's Vaishnavism and Christianity* as quoted above). Under the circumstances the Centenary Forward Movement of Calcutta has sprung a surprise on the world by advertising (*Modern Review*, March and May, 1923) that "India's heart is yearning towards Christ" or the New Testament "will bring spiritual enlightenment to India" We, almost with our physical ears, hear Mother India crying herself hoarse : "Child, sit at my feet." When illumination is abroad it is really very strange that missionary gentlemen should think darkness their light. However, grant to the full that fatherhood of God is a noble idea : grant also that Christendom possessed the consciousness of man's relationship with God in this one restricted sphere ; but what use has it made of it ?

In practical Christianity no room for Fatherhood.

Was not the Father banished at the outset from the field of practical religion and the sacrificed Son-God made all in all ? Even the merest tyro in Christian theology knows it. "Christ claims all as his. He will have our whole being......Our soul, heart, mind and strength, as the Catechism proclaims with deliberate emphasis," so says Mr. James Collier (*Jesus or Christ*). And Raja Rammohan Roy has shown that in the scale of scriptures, the Christian Bible can only be classed with our *Puranas* which are mostly mythical and whose authority is not regarded when they disagree with the "Ved."* Verily, the founder of the Bráhma Samáj was not at all unaware of the *pauranic* character of the Biblical narration. "The missionary gentlemen consider the Bible as their Ved and say," affirms the Rájarshi in his controversial treatise, *the Brahmunical Magazine*, "that the account given in the Bible of the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God is real." There was no reply. So the Serampore missionaries, and for the matter of that, the whole missionary world, British and foreign† alike, had to eat humble-pie and silently but prudently too, remembering discretion to

* श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानां विरोधः यत्र विद्यते ।
तत्र श्रौतं प्रमाणन्तु तयोर्द्वैधे स्मृतिर्वरा ॥

† When the Raja went to England, the Christian mission there could publish nothing better than those writings of Serampore to combat him, thereby showing the utter hollowness of the plea of the *Friend of India* that Rammohan did not find his rival in *this* country. It was a tactful way to cover the retreat by accepting the defeat.

be the better part of valour, accepted the allotment of this low status to their scriptures. 3,414

However, if vanquished in theology, Christian apologists have ethics still to press to their service, though they are quite unconscious of the critical nature of the task. According to Aristotle there are many causes that excite courage, ignorance being one of them. And it is only ignorance that can provoke an honest man to make an unmeasured assertion like that of the late Bishop Westcott of the Anglican Church who, in his *Christus Consummator*, did not demur to write : "The Gospel of Christ Incarnate, the Gospel of the Holy Trinity in the terms of human life, which we have to announce, covers every imaginable fact of life to the end of time, and is new now as it has been new in all the past, new in its power and new in its meaning while the world lasts.' * But as ill-luck would have it, the world has irreverently dared to last a much longer time than the *Christ Incarnate's*† repeated verdict allotted to it ! As the world did not end as it was bidden to do, in-numerable *un-imaginable* facts cropped up in the meantime to the utter confusion of the upholders of "the Gospel of the Holy Trinity" which impartial men have had to discard as

* In order to exhibit a fair sample of what a mess can be made of the Biblical stuff, we contrast this with an equally emphatic deliverance of another clergyman. The Rev. R. J. Campbell says: "Grant to the full that the Sermon on the Mount is no all comprehending rule of life; grant that there are wide tracts of human experience that it leaves untouched ; grant that some of its precepts are impracticable in such a society as ours, and perhaps undesirable too ; grant the eschatological difficulties of other portions of the teaching attributed to Jesus : it still remains true that the being who could inspire others with a faith in God which issued in such a consistent effort to live for the benefit of mankind must have been extraordinary. [Where is the sane man who ever denies the honour due to hundreds of such extraordinary men who have influenced human history equally or better ? But, mark you, the 'extraordinary' claims here have been swamped by so many 'grants' that seriously jeopardise the claim. Still worse !] "To speak of him as morally perfect is absurd. To call him sinless is worse" (*Jesus or Christ*). Then what remains ? We will discuss the question of the assumed influence on human history later on.

† Bishop Temple of Manchester in justification of the Christian tenet of incarnation says among other things that "we can not expect to understand the Person of God Incarnate" (*Christus Veritus*, p 281). The less said of such a doctrine the better for it. Does not the religion of which the central doctrine is unintelligible to human reason carry its death-warrant writ large on its own forehead ? Porphyry disposed of the doctrine of incarnation as an awkward attempt to reunite what, as Inge has pointed out, had been falsely dissevered (*Plotious*, vol. I, p. 65). But no more of it as we have religiously eschewed all metaphysical problems.

old and antiquated. But before considering the end of the world it behoves us to examine the question of its beginning. Dr. James Moffatt while discussing the question of creation remarks : "He [Jesus] believed the Genesis tradition, as is evident from his references to sex and Sabbath" (*The Theology of the Gospels*, p. 85). We are told that this believer in the grandmother's tale is our exemplar for all time to come! Is it not a fact, Darwinism or no Darwinism, the Genesis-tradition has gone to the limbo of oblivion dragging behind it everything that is connected with this legend ? But what about Jesus' idea of God ? "It is a commonplace to say", observes the Rev. Ambrose W. Vernon, "that Jesus never attempted to prove the existence and the power of God. His world took it for granted. So did He . . . . The God Jesus took for granted created the world in six days, and blew his breath into the nostrils of a curious body of clay that He had prepared for that purpose" (*Hibbert Journal*, 1910, p. 58). Does the world still believe in this outworn idea ? The reply comes from this Rev. gentleman a few lines lower down. "When we note that several thousand men in Berlin alone have renounced the Christian faith publicly [who would count the number of those that have done so privately] in one year, we may understand something of the impossibility of taking for granted what Jesus took for granted". Comment is unnecessary. Let the foes fight and kill one another, myself on the safeside, as the Bengali saying goes. Did not Jesus share the belief * in the animistic theory of diseases with the Jews of his time and could therefore successfully (!) exorcise ? M. Loisy took him to be a successful exorciser (H. J., p. 145). It might have been *new* at that time. Is it *new* now ? Humanity has cast off that "imaginable fact of life" as superstitious nonsense after it had been allowed to perpetrate horrible atrocities for a thousand years because of the lead the Gospel gave to its deluded followers. Here is

Christ's God-idea primitive.

Witch-craft.

* Schmiedel avers : yes, he did. Jesus' mind was over-exercised "on the effort to drive out evil spirits, in whose existence he of course believed, like all his contemporaries" (*Jesus in modern Criticism*, p. 55). Says Mr. Robertson : "Exorcists were at an early date a recognised class of officers in connection with the Christian Churches" (S. H. C, p. 72). And also "All orders alike believed fervently in evil spirits ; and the most constant aspect of their faith was as a protection against demoniacal influence. In the service of the Church of Rome in the third century there were forty-six presbyters, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, forty-two acolythes or clerks, and fifty "readers", *exorcists*, and anitors ; and the exercits were at least as hard-worked as any other member of the staff" (p. 83.)

a dilemma. If Jesus did not know the idea of the possession by evil spirits to be an error, his was an imperfect knowledge and that the knowledge of "Christ Incarnate!" If he knew it to be an error, how could he, without the necessary moral blemish being attached to his person, support it by his own example? After carefully and logically examining the matter of which only the fringes we have been able to touch, the Rev. R. Roberts of Bradford tersely concludes: "In a mere man this ethical limitation would be a sin. Is it otherwise in one who is said to be God?" (*Jesus or Christ*). On the other hand, if he was Logos incarnate what is the 'meaning' of the awful mistake he made in choosing his apostles to whom he entrusted the very responsible task of the world's salvation?

Animal Sacrifice.

Half a millenium before the Christian era a supreme protest was made against animal sacrifice in India and the institution tumbled into ashes. If Jesus were a prophet or anything near about, he could not tolerate what horrible things were happening before his very nose, an irascible temper as he is depicted in the gospels. "The Gospel reader who pictures Jesus and his disciples around the paschal lamb does not realise what scenes might have taken place that afternoon. The historian Josephus mentions that on one occasion upwards of a quarter of a million lambs were slain" (Carpenter, *Buddhism and Christianity*, pp. 18-19). What did this *Christ Incarnate* do under these appalling circumstances? Why? "Jesus is not credited with any protest against the sacrificial element of the cultus". Nor was he "affronted by the ritual slaughter in the Temple" (p. 50) and " the disciples were daily in attendance in the precincts after his death" (p. 19). What a magnificent example for the world and how efficient! Far from being an exemplar to the world for all time to come Jesus woefully failed to become an humble follower of the great Buddha.

Sex-problem.

The problem of sex inequality is the most vexed of all the knotty problems of our time. What part does the Gospel play in perpetuating this social canker? Jesus failed to do justice, in the modern sense, to both sides. In the discussion of fornication and divorcement woman's right was left unrecognised as Jesus could not shake off the fetters forged and imposed upon him by a crude and backward society. The injunction is based on the most 'iniquitous' doctrine of the inferiority of women. The New Testament through the Sermon, the admitted bed-rock of Christian ethics, sanctions this sex-subordination which

has caused immense suffering to a half of humanity. But man has been progressive in spite of the Gospel of Christ Incarnate. "We are awaking", boldly asserts Mr. Roberts, "somewhat slowly it is true, but still awaking to the enormous iniquity involved in the sex-inferiority; and the measure of our awaking is the measure of our departure from this part of the Sermon on the Mount." Verily, the ethics of Jesus as to the marriage relationship was primitive. So, in despite of the Gospel prohibiting the marriage of divorced persons, England long ago legitimised it and, now placing the sexes *on the same footing as to divorce and other* matters, Christian England has thrown the Gospel of the Holy Trinity altogether overboard. The pity of it is that the world still endures! Jesus said that heaven and earth would pass away but not a jot of the law. But the Christians, what to say of the rest of the world, obeyed him by negativing the Sabbath commandment *in toto.* In its place they instituted the "Lord's day" or "the day of the Lord" which is nothing but the day of the Sun or Mithra (Sunday), a legacy of Mithraism. It was the Mithraists and Mithraists alone among all the ancient peoples that observed Sunday as a holy day and Mithra was a Sun-god. Necessarily Sunday is called the Lord's day. The Christians had no other incentive to change the Sabbath than some such custom as was established by Mithraism. And for supremacy Christianity had a neck-to-neck race with Mithraism for three centuries. The argument that Sunday is the resurrection day, and therefore holy, does not stand. Friday being the crucifixion day, the miracle of Jonas ("three days and three nights") would bring us to Tuesday, and not Sunday. And in all eschatological predictions a period of "thee days and a fraction" is alloted for resurrection. Moreover, in the Chinese calendar, Sunday is called the 'day of Mithras" (Paul Carus in the *Open Court*, 1906). And yet there is nothing strange in it. From the beginning till now even Christendom has treated the Gospel as a "scrap of paper" and yet the world progresses. Or, it comes to the same thing, as the world is progressing it could not, for the life of it, mete out any other treatment to it. Now, one may afford to refrain from commenting on the ridiculous maxim "Judge not that ye be not judged." Apart from its absurdity, and the impossibility of its being actually given effect to in our practical life, the maxim as a piece of spiritual precept is tainted, as usual, by its commercial implication as the Hindu sage would condemn it. Again, the Gospel is positive about non-resistance and oath-taking. But

the latter is a compulsory prescription in the law-courts. As for the lawgiver himself, "Modern critics (e. g. Holtzman, Achelis etc.) says," remarks Gerald Friedlander, "that Jesus took an oath at his trial (Matt. 26[64-65])." The same authority informs us that Jesus used the word "amen" very frequently and "amen" is a form of oath-taking. "Verily" is the English rendering of "amen". Jesus sometimes swore very emphatically as we find in his utterances, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." It shows Jesus himself did not keep his own word. This is the opinion of such eminent authorities as Meyer, *Encyclopedia Biblica* etc. And Luke informs us that God himself swore (1[73]). Jesus fails but Philo comes to our rescue and to the rescue of the dignity of man; also that of truth and its unaided compelling force. "That being who is the most beautiful, and the most beneficial to human life, and suitable to rational nature, swears not, because truth on every point is so innate within him that his bare word is accounted an oath" (*Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 60-63). That is, it does not require, "verily, verily". Strain the whole Bible and you find nothing to compare with this remark of Philo. And Paul also took oath in the name of God (Vide *Gal.* 1[20]). By the way it is to be remarked that this oath, "Behold, before God, I lie not" is a proof almost to a demonstration that it has been used by the interpolator or concoctor as a cloak to cover the lying account of Paul's conversion. However, what a superior moral force is it that was ushered in by Christianity in the then dark world, the importance of which some theologians such as J. Weiss, Dean Farrar etc. would press on us and what was that forceful enlightenment said to be rapidly spread by Christian teaching which took no less than *nine* long centuries to make people perceive the necessary immoral tendency of oathtaking? Guizot (*History of Civilisation*, vol. II, p. 496) informs us that it was only in Valence, 855 A.D., "the Council blamed the custom of taking the oath, in judicial proceedings, because it necessarily led to perjury." That is, further from the cross nearer the truth. However, if there is any merit in such an injunction it must not be put to the credit of Christianity, but it should be laid at the door of the Essenes. Quotes Dr. Schurer: "They forbid swearing, because it is worse than perjury. For that which does not deserve belief without an appeal to God, is already condemned." (Div. II, vol. II, p. 199).

Oath-taking.

Without raising the question of its theoretical justification, we can say without any fear of contradiction that "Resist no evil"

being a principle of doubtful morality even at the present stage of human evolution, in practice either now or in all the past it has ever remained a dead letter.

Non-resistance of evil.

Why dead letter only ? It has been positively flouted. By the bye, is the flag-blessing bishop of to-day in any way ethically superior to the incantating wizard of yore ? And the custodians of Christianity, her popes and bishops are known to have blessed arms and battleships throughout the ages. And why not ? Jesus himself only once preached the doctrine but never practised it. When occasion arose he resisted and resisted in one of the extremest forms of physical violence. *With a sword his enemy's ear was cut off*, in his very presence, and for* this he himself made his disciples ready beforehand. In most matters of social utility in everyday life, the New Testament is of dubious help ; in some, a positive drawback. We have already discussed the question of women who deserved far better treatment. It will not do to say that the subject could not with propriety be minutely considered by a *sannyasi*. This is no argument as Jesus was not averse to the presence of women, † even of erring women, allowing

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* Luke XXII

36—He that hath no sword, let him sell his garments, and buy one.

38—And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, it is enough. [The multitude came to capture Jesus led by Judas.]

49—When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword ?

50—And one of them [In John 18[10] it is Simon Peter] smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51—And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

Here, in India, people say that the ancient Rishis killed cows and ate their flesh, no doubt, but they afterwards revived them. But can you? It is some consolation for the non-resisters that though Jesus drew blood, he healed the wound. This story was evidently concocted with the purpose to bring Jesus in line with the Old Testament Messiah, a healer. But to the utter dismay of those who want to prove Jesus not a god with miraculous power but a good man, alas ! the Biblical account scandalises them at every step. Moreover, the "sword" had a motive in myth-making. It was in imitation of Mithra that the sword episode was necessitated in the Jesus-story, because in the mythtic God-world the latter's predecessor and rival, "Mithra was the God of soldiers and adventurers" (Inge's *Plotinus*, Vol. I, p. 44). Is not Yahweh in the early Hebrew war-song frankly described as 'a man of war' ? *The Attributes of God*, p. 231).

†, In the Apocryphal gospels it is related that when Jesus on his way to Calvary was passing a lady's house she saw his agony and coming out wiped the perspiration

them, on the contrary, though protested against, to besmear his body with valuable *essences.* This conspicuity of women in the gospel narrative has caused a stir among exegetes including M. Loisy, and the biographers have had to explain this inconvenient phenomenon by *a peculiar attraction of an uncommonly handsome and winsome Rabbi for the eternal feminine.* Dr. Smith, who explains symbolically pertinently asks how such a marked trait of character would be assimilated in an actual life "without fatal offence to the religious consciousness" (*Ecce Deus*, p. 107). So the woman problem was not left unsolved for any ascetic scruples.

Another burning question of the day that an ardent reformer should not have overlooked was slavery. But did Jesus ever raise his little finger against this plague-spot of human society ? What of abolishing, the much vaunted Christian influence deigned not ever to minimise its savagery. Says Mr. Robertson : "The slavery maintained till last century under Christian sanctions and auspices has been as cruel as any seen in human history" and "the strongest defence ever made of slavery as an institution was founded on the Christian sacred books" (S. H. C. pp. xv-xvi). It can never be said that Jesus was unaware of the hard lot of the slaves. He has referred to it by way of increasing the faith of his disciples (Lk. 17[7]). But Christian conscientiousness prompted a mistranslation of the word into 'servant', as the followers of *Christ Incarnate*

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off his forehead with a handkerchief, which received a faithful impression of his face. This is said to have afterwards supplied the materials for Jesus' portrait and the lady was sainted. The fourth of February is the St. Veronica day in the Roman Catholic Calendar.

Some derive the word veronica from *vera icon i, e.,* "true likeness". Then, it is not difficult to understand the underlying meaning of the legend of St. Veronica. When Christ's portaits were to be made some such legend, and there are more than one legend, was required. Christians possessed the Jewish prejudice against images and among early Christians Christ was represented as ungainly. Nobody knew what Jesus looked liked, nor who he was exeept conflicting genealogies interpolated later on into *Matthew* and *Luke.* The iconoclasts seized upon Isaiah 53[2], "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him". At the end of the 3rd century Christians possessed pictures of Christ, but the Church-fathers looked with scorn upon this practice and most Christians looked upon artists as men of disreputable professions and as idol-makers unworthy to belong to Lord's congregation. Gradually, as everywhere, the fear of idolatry abated and antagonism wore out. The idolators searched for and discovered their Biblical text; "Thou art fairer than children of men; grace is poured into thy life," *Psalm*, 45[2]. So Jesus became comely. How was the portrait recovered? Letters were forged and legends manufactured. And the "uncommonly handsome and winsome Rabbi" came into existence (Paul Carus, *Open Court*, 1908).

could not swallow this very imaginable fact of life ! Yet, in these matters Christianity was not to chalk out altogether a new path. The Greeks had already begun as in all other subjects of human interests. Plato championed the cause. And not Plato alone. The poet Philemon expressed the idea that "no one is by nature born a slave." So Dr. Farnell is right to claim in his *Hibbert Lectures*, second series, on behalf of Greece : "The last part of the doctrine of the American Revolution that "all men are born free and equal" begins to be heard in the fourth century B. C." (*Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*, p. 148).

Slavery.

"Three centuries before Christ he [Plato] censured slavery, which neither Christ nor any other Christian discovered to be immoral until twelve centuries later." (Mc.Cabe) It is true, Aristotle supported slavery as the natural state for some men, but Philo contradicted him and condemned it as the worst of evils. And half a millenium before the Christian era "the trade of the slave-dealer was forbidden" by the Buddha (*Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 99). "And he" [Plato], continues Mr. McCabe, "vindicated the equality of woman more than two thousand years before any Christian perceived it." (S. M. G., p. 103). If Bishop Westcott insists that there is nothing new here, that Jesus taught all these things, then he makes his master so effective a teacher that the world required thousands of years to understand him though these things had been known already ! This is to fly out of the frying pan into the fire. However, a word will not be mis-spent here about the blood-curdling gladiatorial fights. The tradition that they were done away with by Christian Honorius (404) is denied by modern Christian scholarship. "It may be that a humane monk did lose his life in trying to stop them, but there is clear proof that the games subsisted in Christian Gaul at a later date, though even humane pagans had called for their abolition, and their cost was a heavy burden on the falling revenue. Centuries before the time of Honorius, Apollonius of Tyana was credited with causing them to be abolished at Athens." (S. H. C. p. 156). That is, the Christians lagged behind the pagans in all virtuous efforts, both positive and negative. They could not even profit by a precedent. Jesus left the harsh laws of debtor and creditor where he found them.

Gospel no help for Men in Society.

A ban is put on the love of parents, its opposite is enjoined. As to the respect and care due to the aged : why ? Let the dead bury their dead ! This anti-social ideal of the New Testament, destruct've

of family sentiment, brought disastrous consequences upon Europe. The life of man in the family is given no thought, his relation with the body-politic appears to be simply passive ; with trade he is not only by reason of his calling unconcerned, but visibly averse to it, and everything relating to the arts and the enjoyment of the elegances of life is absolutely removed from his range of vision. This glaring drawback has not failed to arrest the attention of Dr. Schmiedel in spite of his known pre-possession in favour of Jesus' high mission in *life*. He lays the blame at the door of his preoccupation with the idea that the end of the world was near at hand. "Certainly we have *few, if any, utterances of Jesus on the importance of daily work, civil society, the State, Art, Science,* and the attitude to be adopted towards all these things which seem to us to be great blessings." And then, as if by way of protest against Bishop Westcott's indiscreet asseveration, the Doctor deplores "the old notion that he must have given a complete system of ethical teaching, adapted to all times" (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, pp. 59-60). The defects are not of details, but the true perspective itself is wanting from first to last, as Strauss in his *Life of Jesus* has remarked. The wants in these respects were partly supplied by the past achievements of Greece and Rome which Christianity failed to accommodate and partly by what was reserved for the further development of mankind and its history in spite of Christianity. Can any one in the broad day light of the twentieth century reconcile himself to the counsel of political submission as inculcated by Jesus? There is no hint of any other political ideal "to the end of time". But, on the contrary, "to any surviving vestiges of the ideal of self government Christian literature is broadly hostile" (S. H. C. p. 63). Yet Dr. Giekie would say that it was Christ's teachings that fructified in having given freedom to the slave ; raised woman ; purified morals ; mitigated war [what a mockery ?] ; created liberty ; and made humanity a growing force in things private, civil and political (*Life of Christ*, p. ix). Even blind faith did not ever dare to make greater havoc of truth ! However, this is then the fate of Bishop Westcott's claim that every imaginable fact of life to the end of time is to be gathered from his God Incarnate's Gospel ! Verily, the Bishop's is a game of bluff ! Or, if he is serious, he gives the world one more occasion to exclaim, "excellent food for the poor !" Dr. Frazer cuts the bottom from beneath the contention that Jesus was given to humanity for all time to come, by concluding that if humanity had followed him strictly,

the very existence of the race would have been threatened by this time. His teachings in some respects, says the savant, "struck straight at the root not merely of civil society but of human existence" Therefore the vast majority of mankind "refused to purchase a chance of saving their souls with the certainty of extinguishing the species" (*Golden Bough*, abridged edition, p. 362).

Neither does the temperance movement* get any aid and co-operation, because your opponent will not fail to quote verses from the New Testament in his favour. It is rather a hindrance in that respect. Cold water is thrown on the political struggle of a subject race by the unqualified injunction, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," thereby confining the so called religion and politics in two water-tight compartments. Another questionable dictum is the taboo on making any provision for the future; i.e., "Take no heed of the morrow." Because of its irrationality, the Christian reply to it has been a net-work of insurance and co-operative societies and their like. It could not be otherwise. The power and meaning of the facts of life in the 20th century can not be searched for and found in the "sayings" of a man of thirty in a village of Galilee two thousand years back. It is ludicrous to ask the world to follow him to the end of time in all stages of development. No, Jesus can not be an exemplar, at least, in our mundane affairs. An other-worldly man, as he is, he has most fittingly been made the messenger of the destruction of the world. The impending end of the present state of existence being the dominant note in the whole mass of his teachings, we cull three characteristic elements in the gospel morality, viz., cast away your possessions, make no provision for the future and be eunuchs of God, *i. e.*, marry not. Don't think the last is figurative! Other teachings that have been put together in his name are ethical platitudes capable of being gathered from whatever quarter you look to, ancient and modern, eastern and western. They are as old as the hills. Justice, the very foundation-virtue of human society, is least developed of all. Try to know the tree by its fruits! As an inevitable reaction

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* Martin Luther discarded the Old Testament, but retained the New on the basis of private judgment and inaugurated the protestant movement. To him the following maxim is attributed by Heine:

"Who loves not woman, wine and song
Remains a fool his whole life long," as quoted by John Dewey in his *German Philosophy and Politics*.

against a vexatious and impracticable standard that ignores the claim of culture and human interests properly so called, we have been presented with the nauseating pictures of the grossness and immorality of the Christian middle ages that have blackened the pages of history for ever. Says Mr. Lecky: "The writers of the Middle Ages are full of accounts of nunneries that are like brothels; of the vast multitude of infanticides within walls, and of that inveterate prevalence of incest among the clergy which rendered it necessary again and again to issue the most stringent enactments that priests should not be permitted to live with their mothers and sisters". (*History of European Morals*, vol. 11, ch. 5, p. 331). Were it not better that the world came to an end as predicted ? Human nature can not be starved with impunity even in the name of religion. The Centenary Forward Movement invited us to "study the Bible and find Christ" (M. R. June, 1924). What do we find ? The net result of our study is that the life and teachings of Jesus delineated in the Bible if interpreted in the literal sense can not be offered as an example to any decent set of men in the 20th century for their imitation. Symbolico-allegorical interpretation, however, saves a little. After this if any one, as Hector Waylen in *Mountain Pathways*, dogmatically asserts : "Did Jesus act in this way ? Undoubtedly" (p. 29) or "He himself was an example to us, and he carried out, to the letter, his own teaching" (p. 10), we are entitled to pass it over without noticing it. Because it is against the consummate judgment of all impartial critics. We shall presently see that the precepts and life of Jesus are outrageously opposed to each other as proving the inevitable result of their being fabricated by different hands, however noble the *precepts* in selection may appear. Dr. Schweitzer, necessarily with a bleeding heart because he believes in the historicity,* after summarising the results of a laborious research into the history of the controversy from Reimarus (1778) to Wrede (1901) has been obliged to emphatically declare : "we must be prepared to find that the historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence to religion." (*The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 399). So it is not the so-called hostile critics only who have managed to get into that view surreptitiously. The idea that Jesus gave us an example in all matters and

* "Of the real history of Jesus but little is preserved in the Gospels" *Ibid* p. 397.

for all time to come, has been almost ridiculed by Pfleiderer by remarking that "any one who seeks to make eschatological prophetic enthusiasm a permanent authority and standard of social ethics is acting no more wisely than one who should attempt to warm his hearth and cook his dinner with the flames of a volcano" (*Primitive Christianity*, vol. II, p. 447). Yet their name is legion who press the example of Christ on us in season and out of season as if mere urging repeatedly by a large number would make a rotten thing whole. They forget that in such matters we weigh and do not count the number.

However, it has been urged† that water can not rise above its source. So Christ, as represented by hostile critics, instead of being so long venerated would have long ago been execrated,—the worshippers think aloud. In reply, we simply refer to the gospel narrative. Was he not stoned and crucified instead of being loved and revered ? One beloved disciple, not to speek of ordinary followers, betrayed him for a few pieces of silver, and another, more beloved, denied him at a moment when an actual murderer would be commiserated by a stranger. Is this love and veneration ? Jesus, represented as a man walking among men, not one born *only* of a woman, was not an object of love and never of veneration. He was venerated only as a deified being. And deification is in no case based on moral grandeur but always on the attributed supernatural powers. When the resurrection myth was spread among a credulous people, the whole mediterranean coast then being aglow with the expectation of a Messiah as the historians tell us, the Christ was thrust upon the distracted world as a God and in a God the blemishes of the gospel-Christ's character magnified tenfold would not detract a jot or iota from his divinity. We see it around us, the Hindu and Greek mythologies being our witnesses. Is not Krishna venerated, was not Zeus worshipped, though some of their acts are considered to be not only not above suspicion but positively immoral ? What Dr. Schmiedel says, seems to me to be final in this connection, though the Doctor is perhaps unaware of the significance of his saying. Speaking of the *historical* Jesus and why he was venerated, the theologian assures us : " Had he not been regarded as the second person of the Trinity we may be sure that one nation after another would not have bent the knee before him" (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p 87). Those who

† By Rev. C. F. Andrews in the Calcutta *Modern Review*, September 1923.

know, know it full well that people believed in Christ not because of any moral splendour, in the then Stoic atmospohere it was sheerly impossible for a man to create a sensation by his moral eminence, but because of the fables connected with birth and death. Among those who studied Christianity from psychological standpoint, Dr Percy Gardner is one of the foremost and his opinion must carry weight with those who want to know the truth. "For any one who studies the marvellous story of the rise of the Church it soon becomes clear that that rise was conditioned—perhaps was made possible—by the conviction," observes, the Doctor, "that the founder was not born like other men of an earthly father, and that his body did not rest like those of other men in the grave, but left it and ascended through the clouds to sit on the right hand of God, thence one day to return for the judgment of the world" (*A Historic View of the New Testament*, popular ed., p. 161). As before the insurgent light of scientific discoveries the supernaturalists and miracle-mongers had to beat a hasty retreat in the last century, so before the compelling authority of historical research the humanisers must lay down their arms now and here. No sentimental nonsense, bred of age-long superstition, will be tolerated to-day. The fable of Adam and Christ should be banished from our midst with others of that ilk. The sudden entrance of evil into the world through the fall of original innocence is as unevolutional, therefore irrational, as the equally sudden removal of it by the mechanical hybrid agency, divine and human. The Christian scheme of salvation through Christ is no better than this chimera.

Christian theologians are monumental personification of Goldsmith's epigram—though vanquished he would argue still. There is a substantial agreement among the philosophers of the day that human consciousness is a partial reproduction of the divine mind. There was a time, to confine ourselves to Christendom only, when man as such being considered tainted by his inherent sinfulness, the question as to the relation between God and man was confined only to the nature of Christ. But that narrowness of vision has at present been altogether removed. We discuss that subject now, as Dr. Edward Caird has remarked, in respect of the relation of humanity in general to divinity. In the light of universal reason—ever-awake witness in man of his divine origin, no one man has the exclusive claim to be divine. A particular man is divine because all men are divine. And God cannot exhaust Himself in a particular man as there is no qualitative distinction between man and man,

however high or low. If so, Christianity must be in a very bad way with its dogma of absolute depravity of human nature on the one hand, and the exclusive divinity of Christ as fancifully assumed by orthodox Christians on the other. But the theologian is not without his device. Why ? If quality fails, quantity comes to his rescue. Is not God revealed more in the more developed intellect and moral consciousness of man ? The philosopher heaves a sigh of relief finding a way out of the *impasse* and cogitates : 'Now, if in the life, teaching, and character of Christ—in his moral and religious consciousness, and in the life and character which so completely expressed and illustrated that consciousness we can discover the highest *revelation* [of course, when the canon gets the better of the philosopher and when one manages to forget that evolution did not cease two thousand years ago] we can surely attach a real meaning to the language of the Creeds which singles him out from all the men that ever lived [what about the intervening generations] as the one in whom the ideal relation of man to God is most completely realised. If God can only be known as revealed in Humanity, and Christ is the highest representative of Humanity, we can very significantly say 'Christ is the Son of God, very God of very God, of one substance with the Father'' (Rashdall, *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 180—181). If it is really so, it is a historical question and must be discussed historically. But discretion is the better part of valour and the philosopher shirks the issue, because critical discussions are "outside the purpose of these lectures." And perhaps purposely so, as the assumption does not bear the light of historical criticism, as we have shown, And unfortunately he himself is aware of it. "Take for example" observes the historian in him, "the case of slavery. Our Lord never condemned slavery : it is not certain that he would have done so had the case been presented to him" (p. 166) That is, Christ did not know what a school-boy to-day with a text book of ethics in his hand knows, nor was it apprehended by the Christian consciousness either, except fifteen hundred years afterwards. Yet the philosopher gives it as his considered opinion that in the Christ was the completest expression of God-consciousness in all history. There can not be a completer refutation of the thesis : Water can not rise above its source. This is the tragical story of the breakdown of the modern Christian man's thought-mechanism. One is reminded of Mr. Dick in David Copperfield !

One point more. It is a sorry spectacle to see this preposterous claim put forward on behalf of Jesus by such well-intentioned

scholar as Rev. Travers Herford that "the effect of his coming into the world has been greater than that made by any one else in history" (*The Pharisees*, p. 201). They say the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Tested by this logic of experience, does history justify the pretension that with Jesus there entered into the world a moral force that regenerated human society to a degree unknown before or since, or does "the effect produced," on the contrary, supply a crucial instance that at least in this sphere water rises above its source? Let the historian reply:

Verdict of History.

"If we talk of moral success it must still be said that Christianity never gave any section of the Roman Empire a ruler worthy to stand by Marcus and Julian; and that on all the thrones of the world [Christendom ?] to-day there is no man who can be put above them for moral nobility. If, again, we keep our eyes on the age of Constantine, we cannot but be struck by the fact that Constantius "the pale'', the father of Constantine, a monotheist but not a Christian, and Julian, who turned away from Christianity to polytheism, are by far the best men in the series of rulers of that house. Christianity attracted the worse men, Constantine and his sons, and repelled or failed to satisfy the better; and younger Constantius, who was bred and remained a Christian, is the worst of all. *The finer character-values are all associated with paganism : on the Christian side there is a signal defect of good men*" (S. H. C., p. 128). On this historical adjudication we cannot possibly make any comment except that the italics are ours. We hope we shall not be held guilty of irreverence if we say that at least in this case water has risen above its source by artificial pumping. Such a sympathetic writer as Herford who, by virtue of his Christian prejudice, an almost universal characteristic of all Christian scholars and their dupes all the world over, dogmatically takes Christ to be the greatest spiritual force of all history as we have already pointed out, has been nevertheless constrained as the result of his mature study of the gospels, to admit: "I know of nothing in the Gospel records to show that his mental outlook extended beyond his country and, in the beginning at all events, beyond his own nation. One who is reported to have said (Matt. xv. 24), to a woman of a neighbouring people, "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," would surely have expressed himself differently if he had had any clear conception of mankind as a whole, let alone of himself as having any function in

relation thereto. That he had any far-reaching views upon any subject of thought whatever, a comprehensive theology, a profound philosophy or an elaborate theory of social questions, does not, so far as I can see, anywhere appear" (*The Pharisees*, p. 203). And such a narrow-minded ignorant Jew, too narrow and too uncultured even for the first century, is pitchforked on us as an exemplar for all time to come in this scientific age of international idealism and universal human fellowship. We hope and pray, Rev. Mr. Andrews will not charge Herford with ignorance of Greek and Hebrew, as he did when he entered the lists with Mr. Maheschandra Ghosh Vedántaratna, to get out of the tight corner into which his special pleading for Christ has thrown him. It may be a news to these missionary gentlemen that Mr. Ghosh knows Greek. Will Mr. Andrews still persist in his superstition that water does not rise above its source ?

b. Motivated Love and Spontaneous *Maitri*.

Jesus is claimed to be unique and original in his love of neighbours and of enemies. Did he not say : "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"? Yes, but the exact words are found in the Old Testament (*Deut.* 6^4 and *Levit.* 19^{18}). Whomsoever I can not tolerate walks askew is as true as love is blind. So, as in Mark 12^{29-31}, we find a combination of love of God and love of man, Mr. Montefiore sees in it a "brilliant flash of the highest religious genius", because the combination was first effected in this way by Jesus (*Synoptic Gospels*, p. 288). But he is mistaken. The honour is due to the Pharisee who long before the Christian era wrote in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, "I loved the Lord ; Likewise also everyman with all my heart" (*Issachar* 7^6, also 5^2, and *Dan* 5^3 as translated by Dr. R. H. Charles in his English edition, pp. 107, 109, 127,) On the other hand, the love of one's neighbour in the most comprehensive sense of the word, is as old as the Vedas : मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्व्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम् । मित्रस्य अहं चक्षुषा सर्व्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे,—'May all beings regard me with the eye of a friend. May I regard all beings with the eye of a friend" (*Yayur* 35^{18}). But, at first, let us confine ourselves to the Jewish sacred books, as a slight allusion to the Buddhistic literature would at once swamp Christianity on its own presumptuous ground. So, for the present we abstain from the venture. Now to the task ! Did Jesus really say, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine

Vedic Injunction loftier.

enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies"? (Matt. 5^{43}).

Misrepresentation in the Gospels.

If so, he was ignorant of the Mosaic law, popularly so called.* Not only the charge of ignorance but that of wilful misrepresentation is justly laid at his door, which, in this case almost amounts to a moral guilt. Friedlander has called it "deliberate invention." Because, here an injunction "Thou shalt hate thine enemy" is quoted in the name of the Law with the ostensible purpose of proving the superiority of the New Testament —a statement which is not to be found in the former. The Law itself, on th contrary, with as much emphasis enjoins the love of enemies. Then, why did Jesus make this palpable mistake? Psycho-analysts (e. g. Freud, *Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life*, p. 69) say that our mistakes have their root in our mind, they are not mere chance-occurrences. They would prove that as the hate of enemies—whom he thought his enemies, was engrained in his nature, it manifested itself in the form of this misquotation, technically called *substitutive formation.* Whom, on the other hand, did Jesus take to be his enemies? Those who refused to accept him as the Messiah. What punishment did he prescribe for them, for the matter of that, how endearingly he loved them? Why, let Luke the historian tell the tale: "Howbeit these mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (19^{27}). Ransack the whole history of mankind, scarcely you get an example of such loving-kindness towards enemies! But a quite different kind of love is preached by the pre-Christian *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*: "Love one another in the heart, and if any one sin against thee, so speak with him in peace and banish the venom of hatred, and do not let revenge abide in thine heart." This reminds us of *Dhammapada*, 223: अक्कोधेन जिने कोधं असाधुं साधुना जिने। Philo advises to "bestow benefits on your enemy, and then will follow of necessity the end of your enmity" (*On Humanity* as quoted by Friedlander in J. S., p. 73). This chimes with the utterance of the *Mahábhárata*: जयेत् कदर्यं दानेन। (*Udyoga*, 39^{74}). However, the following casual extracts will show that the charge laid at the door of the Old Testament is maliciously false. *Levit.* 19^{18} asks not to

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* Even the assumption that there was a "Mosaic Law" is open to challenge. P. C. p. 67.

"avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of the people." And not the children of the people only. "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." (*Levit.* 19[34]). "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (*Prov.*). The Psalmist sings, "Let them curse, but bless thou" (109[28]). To the bewilderment of these who boast of the gospel passage (*Matt.* 5[44]): "Bless thou that curse you, do good to them that hate you", it, being found an interpolation, has been left out by the *Revised Version*. Though the Christian Bible has lost its flavour, we find the following in the pre-Christian *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*: "Bless them that curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for them that persecute you." How Gándhi-like the injunction is! And we mean no disrespect. In order to salve the gospels Dr. Farrar theorises that the ignorant copyists may have omitted passages. But Dr. Carpenter rebutting argues that "this charge seems to be really without foundation. The evidence points to gradual accretion rather than to intentional omission" (F. T. G. p. 394). The motive is clear. As superior moral maxims were discovered in ancient or contemporary literature, they were forthwith incorporated. All the same, the Talmud teaches in the same vein: "How is it possible for one that fears God to hate a man and regard him as an enemy? It is better to be wronged by others than to wrong". "Be rather among the persecuted than the persecutors." "Forgive thy neighbour the injury he has done thee: then will thy sins be forgiven thee when thou prayest." The last quotation is from Jesus' namesake, Jesus Sirach (28[1]), before which the originality of the former's Lord's Prayer* vanishes into the thin air. As for the universal maxim

Jewish Authorities.

* If Jesus ever lived and spoke, it is quite a hopeless task to go to determine what words he uttered and consequently what ideas came out of him even in such an important subject as the Lord's Prayer. According to Harnack, Drews informs us, the earliest Christian version is: "Father, the bread for to-morrow give us to-day." (*Witnesses*, p. 251). Finding it ludicrous on the face of it, the *Authorised Version* materially changed the meaning. Is not it an echo of the Old Testament *Manna* episode in the wilderness? Manna spoiled on the hand because, instead of remaining satisfied with the 'daily' bread, the chosen people tried surreptitiously to preserve the same for the morrow. This "bread" never meant anything spiritual as some have persuaded themselves to believe. It indicates an excessive hunger for earthly food not less keen than the earth-hunger of the present-

of life, it is to be noted that the same is in a negative form in the older editions of the gospels. It is to be noted also that in the affirmative form the maxim, though quite in keeping with the low code of the ethic of action promulgated in the New Testament urging to confer benefits in order to have them returned, turn out quite unpalatable to us, Hindus, who are, in their *S'ástras*, taught *ad extremum* to do good without expecting any reciprocity. However, in the negative form it was copied from the Old Testament and the Talmud. And its parallels are very easily found in India and China. "What thou dost not like, do not to thy neighbour" (Hillel). "What thou dost not wish any man to do unto thee, do thou not unto another" (*Tobias*, 4[16]). "The Golden Rule that touches both sides, is, of course," observes Mr. Whittaker, "to be found not only in Greek but in Chinese† classics long before the Christian era. (Whether it occurs in the positive or in the negative form is immaterial)" (O. C., p. 30). And its parallels are very easily found in India also: यथैवात्मा परस्तद्वत् द्रष्टव्यः शुभमिच्छता। सुखदुःखानि तुल्यानि यथात्मनि तथापरे॥—*Mahábhárata* quoted by Raja Rammohan Roy. सब्बे तसन्ति दण्डस्स सब्बेसं जीवितं पियं। अत्तानं उपमं कत्वा न हनेय्य न घातये। धम्मपद, १३०

Golden Rule Universal.

Count Tolstoy, an octogenarian, whose name is never uttered without the due meed of reverence, remarked just one year before his death: "The two great principles of Jesus: the love of God, that is absolute perfection, and the love of one's neighbour, the love of all men without any distinction whatsoever, have been preached by all the sages of the world." If no distinction is to be claimed for Jesus, why study Christianity specially? "If I have been especially interested in the teachings of Jesus," continues the saint, "it is, first, because

Tolstoy's View.

day Christendom. Hungry people see visions as the hungry soldiers, when retreating from Mons, saw angels. These people i. e. the followers of Jesus, are not expected to have separated fact from fiction. However, if we can not put faith on the gospellers in such an important detail, in what can one trust them? In order to know fully how the evangelists made a mess of the materials at their disposal, one should go through the most up-to-date book on the subject, *The Solution of the Synoptic Problem* by Robinson Smith. However, about the Prayer it is to be noted "that the entire formula was in Jewish use before the rise of the Jesuist movement" (C. M. p. 407). So it is not Jesus who taught his disciples, but it was the master himself who was taught by his forbears to pray according to that prescribed form, not very lofty spiritually, in all conscience.

† "Leo-Tsze (not only lays down the Golden Rule but has a set of six maxims closely resembling the Beatitudes" (P. C., p. 219). Confucius too has similar maxims,

I was born and have lived among Christian people; second, because I have found a great intellectual pleasure in disengaging the pure teaching from the surprising falsifications affixed to it by Churches" (from a letter written by Tolstoy as quoted in the *Open Court*, January, 1914). In this pleasant task Rammohan had engaged himself a century ago, but, for it, he incurred the displeasure of the then Christian world here and elsewhere. Now, if a plebiscite is taken and people give out their mind as honestly as Tolstoy, 99 per cent will agree with him that their Christian predilection is due to their being born Christians, and brought up in Christian atmosphere. However, this is only by the way. Even Dr. Carpenter admits that by Buddhism "the Christian maxim of universal benevolence was early formulated in a positive form." (*Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 137). The Unitarian Doctor of Divinity appears to be an adept in putting a strong case weakly, at least, when it concerns the rival of Christianity. Otherwise, as a matter of fact, he knows full well that the Buddha's *Brahma-vihára*, *i. e.* the fourfold daily meditation of *Maitri* (Fraternal greeting to all creatures), *Karuná* (Compassion for those in distress), *Muditá* (Sympathy with all in joy), and *Upekshá* (Ever-contentedness with all things) as practical disciplines of life for attaining love for all, or for the matter of that, merging oneself in all when the question of *love of enemies* will never arise, has never been approached by any ethico-spiritual system in the whole history of the world. Yet a Christian philosopher still labours under a delusion that prompts him to say: "Humanity is encouraged by the Buddhist not from a motive of disinterested affection" (Hastings Rashdall, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 151). It has now been well-nigh impossible to get any light from western philosophers unless their mind is set free from the incubus of the false reverence cherished for a personality. They are literally afraid to look in the face anything superior to the gospel-teachings, as if men in the 20th century are still to be guided by what is said to have been given out in a corner two milleniums ago. The momentous teaching of the most informing century, I mean the 19th, is lost on them because of this incubus. However, a word or two will not be ill-spent before we bid adieu to the vexed question of the Golden Rule. Christian theologians, finding the old reputation of the New Testament threatened on all sides, have unnecessarily raised a tremendous row over the positive form of the maxim, quite unaware that in the gospels also, originally it was in the negative form, or that hundred

No Match for Buddhism.

positive forms can be offered from India such as "यत् यदात्मनि चेच्छेत तत् परस्यापि चिन्तयेत्" (*S'antiparva*, 258^{22}). However, in the Western text of the Bible we have the reading, "And whatsoever they do not wish to be done to them, not to do that to others." St. Paul and the Fathers preferred the negative form. This is a matter of temperament only. Positive form puts emphasis on the *self* whereas the negative on the *not-self*. As the New Testament gradually developed the ethic of reward *ad nauseum*, the negative form gradually changed. On this subject Gerald Friedlander's learned disquisition in his *Jewish Sources* (pp. 230-238) and also in his earlier pamphlet, the *Law of Love in the Old and New Testament*, would be of great help to come to a conclusion. Albeit the final settlement bristles with insuperable difficulties owing to the partisan spirit that has been brought to bear upon the dispute. It appears from the procedure adopted by the combatants that not truth but the establishment of comparative merits has been taken to be the arbiter. He shows that the source of the Rule is the Old Testament verse "Love thy neighbour as thyself." There are numerous paraphrases of this, both positive and negative, in the Jewish literature, the positive form being no discovery of the New Testament. It culminates in the combination of both the forms in *Aboth de Rabbi Nathan* as the following quotation proves : "Just as a man sees to his own honour and reputation, so let him see to his neighbour's, and just as he does not like an evil report to be spread concerning his own character, so let him desire not to spread an evil report concerning his neighbour." Even Bishop Gore, through oversight, of course, credits the Old Testament with the negative version only. Seneca and Epictetus had both positive and negative forms. And the New Testament-writers never hesitated to draw upon the Stoic authors, though in this case there was no such necessity, the Jewish literature having sufficed. Matthew's addition to the Golden Rule :"This is the Law and Prophets'—conclusively proves its Jewish origin. So, if any one is willing to find his way out, he can easily see through the dust raised round the question by interested parties. Nor are fresh parallels needed to confute the cavillers either. That necessity has been obviated by Joseph McCabe's informing book, *The Sources of the Morality of the Gospels* which throws a flood of lurid light on this unreasonable claim to the ethical superiority of the New Testament. By placing in parallel columns the sayings of Jesus side by side with those of the Old Testament,

the Talmud, the Greek and Roman authorities, (unfortunately not of India and China. Egypt and Babylon also might be of great help), he has shown up the hollowness of the claim. Therefore, Mr. McCabe has every right to protest that "writers are too apt to appraise the uniqueness of Christ's teaching without any close study of those other moralities which they thus assume to be inferior to that of Christ" (*S. M. G., Preface*). Yes, theirs is an unbiassed judgment! But if one intends quibbling, there is no end of it. It is urged that though both the teachings, *viz.*, the love of God and love of man are found separately in other places their combination is evangelical. Even Pfleiderer has been caught in the trap (*Primitive Christianity*, vol. iv, Chap. xix, p. 334). But, on the contrary, Luke informs us that the combination can not be put to the credit of Jesus. It is primarily due to a Jewish lawyer. This is what it should be. How could it be otherwise when the combination occurs several times in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*? (See *Supra* p. 46) Philo also combines them in his discourses by insisting on the duty to God through *piety* and *holiness* and that to man through *love* and *justice* (vide Prof. James Drummond's *Philo*, vol. II, pp. 315-316). And as it was familiar to the Rabbis, the combination came handy to the lawyer (Lk. 10^{27}). This view is supported by such eminent Biblical scholars as Friedlander, Walker, Wick, Bartlett, Salmond, McNeile, Plummer, Klostermann and others. Here I can not resist the temptation of quoting from one whose verdict has the seal of authority, because he is an orthodox christian, an eminent Hebrew and Greek scholar, the translator of the *Testaments* and the Editor of its Greek text. Dr. Charles emphasises in the Introduction that "the two great commandments were already conjoined in the teaching of the Scribes at the time of our Lord, we may reasonably infer from the account of our text, which were written 140 years earlier, and from the account in Luke" (p. xcv.)

Little Ones. Jesus' alleged blessing on little children has undoubtedly a pathos of its own. Literally considered, this is a tender human act sufficient to prepossess one in favour of the gentle Nazarene as Jesus is thought to have been. But is love of children exclusively a Jewish virtue that Jesus had a monopoly of it? Yet the term here is not to be taken literally. "Little ones" (Matt. 18^{1-6}) or "little children" are new Gentile converts and the most hard-hearted Durvásá never fails to be tender to his proselytes. "The Latin word "Paulus" means small, and there is good reason," points out Mr. L. G. Rylands in noticing Hermann Raschke's book,

Die Werkstatt, "to believe that the child set in the midst of the disciples and taken by Jesus into his arms is intended by the evangelist to represent Paul" (*The Literary Guide*, May, 1926). It goes without saying that Raschke explains symbolically and throws a great deal of new light on the subject, the book being "a good example of the new method in the New Testament exegesis" (Vide *infra*, Chap. xx d). "Whoever shall offend ["scandalise" according to Smith] one of these little ones which believe in me" is proof positive of this contention. All doubts, if any remains, are removed when it is remembered that the narrow-minded Jewish disciples objected to this presentation of *children* to Jesus (Matt. 19^{13-15}, Mk. 10^{13-16}, and Lk. 18^{15-17}) as they were unwilling to give the Gentiles an equal status with them, which was actually a much debated question in the early Church. Is there any meaning, taken literally, in *scandalising*, even *offending* little children? But the meaning is clear when they are taken to be non-Jewish, specially Pauline converts to Christianity, and evidently this portion of the gospels was indited by pro-Gentile hands. "The writers are all liberal; they insist on the equal rights of Gentiles; and Matthew with his wonted splendid rhetoric," holds Dr. Smith in *Ecce Deus* (p. 118) "denounces ruin upon whoever would scandalise them—that is, make them offend by imposing upon them Jewish rites and ceremonies or restrictions which they would fail to observe and so would catch them as in a trap." This view is supported by the Talmud: "Sojourner who becomes a proselyte is like a little one who is born" or "Gentile that is proselytised and the slave that is free, behold! he is like a little one new born" (*Ibid*). It is true, Jesus somewhere forbade any expectation of rewards from men by demanding "thy left hand" not to know what "thy right hand" gave. So much so good as far as it goes. But unfortunately it does not go far enough because of the bogey of compensation hereafter (Matt. 6^{1-4}). Here also no credit of absolute novelty would be conferred on the gospels. Rabbinic ethics is equally insistent. R. Janai seeing "a man giving alms to another man in public rebuked him "as if he had committed murder" (O. T. A. 431). An expectation hereafter is not prohibited, rather encouraged everywhere. No doubt, the ethic of reward and punishment was a legacy from the Old Testament. But one could naturally expect the New Law to have wholly superseded it, because from this taint the Old itself was gradually emerging. Says Mr. Montefiore: "God, and His Law were so loved that the fulfilment of the Law was carried out for its own sake, and

not merely for the reward" (*Ibid* p. 141). But Christianity failed to take advantage of this natural course of evolution. It clung to this low code like a leech as they say. Philo's noble advice which echoes that of the Hindu sage fell flat upon the evangelists : "For they who give hoping to receive a requital such as praise or honour and seeking for a return of the favour which they are conferring, under the specious name of a gift, are really making a bargain" (*On the Cherubim* as quoted in *Jewish Sources* p. 103). But Jesus warns his audience : "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them. Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." How noble ! The much-made-of beatitudes in the Sermon are at best promises of compensation only. Do something and you will get something more valuable hereafter, thereby vitiating the whole system by a mercantile spirit. Yudhisthira in the *Mahábhárata* has condemned one expecting reward in the life to come as धर्म्मवाणिज्यको हीनो जघन्य: धर्म्मवादिनाम्—Of all men of religion the vilest is he who is actuated by a mercenary consideration. It reduces the noblest passion of man to mere speculation—most repugnant to the finer sentiment of human nature. The Hindu Yogi will most emphatically spurn at the suggestion, as इहामुत्र फलभोगविराग : (i.e., to give up altogether the idea of recompense here or hereafter) is his first requisite to enter the portals of spiritual life worth the name. The advice of Philo is : "The good man acquires excellence and virtue for their own sake alone, and not for the sake of anything else, and the works themselves are the perfect reward" (Drummond, *Philo*, p. 26, vol. I). So we are constrained to differ from Dr. J. E. Carpenter when he says that "he (Jesus) was obliged to use the forms of thought provided by his age and they were inadequate to the loftiness of his idea. His principles far transcended the moulds which the time provided" (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 394). The Doctor has forgotten his Buddhism, and more so, the Law and the Prophets nearer home ! However, in view of the above, we feel quite non-plussed at the Calcutta Centenary Forward Movement's advertisement (*Modern Review*, April 1923) to the following effect : "The teachings of Jesus Christ are found in the New Testament, in whose pages He speaks a message for all men. [Does not Jesus say "I was not sent etc. ?" Matt. 15[24]]. When India hears His voice [How can that be ? "His" voice is: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles" Matt. 10[5-6]] she will attain her destiny."*

Beatitudes grossly *S'akáma.*

* India teaches "मद्यमदेयमपेयमग्राह्यम्" Wine—not to offer, not to drink,

Mother India's own voice is "मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूः" and that of Christ is "Great is your reward in heaven."—diametrically opposed to each other. This will, then, remain an enigma for all time to come how by hearing one voice the other's destiny will be attained. As long as people believed Christianity to be a mechanical contrivance to confer salvation on the buyers of 'indulgences', such a method of preaching had its day ; but when all the world over religion is being estimated by its capacity to humanise the brute and spiritualise the man, such ignorant gibberishes can not be tolerated. If the Christian missions have found their occupation gone, they may turn their attention to something more profitable in fresh fields and pastures new, instead of rushing into the forbidden ground. Yet the cry is, "still they come". This time a Professor of the Bombay Wilson College. It is really regrettable that the professor would make a common cause with the missionary. "Hinduism has, properly speaking, no new Testament* and it is hard to see how," observes Professor John McKenzie in his recently published *Hindu Ethics* (1922), "there could be got from its essential principles a Gospel which would express itself

nor to accept. "सुरापानम्"—drinking is one of the five deadly sins—"महापातकम्" । But himself a wine-bibber, Jesus used to prepare wine with his own hands Gin is in the gospel, beer in the Bible. Far from attaining her destiny by accepting, India would one day be roused to reject, the New Testament altogether, so quite foreign to her genius. And not India alone. Strauss remarked long ago and time has not impaired the force of this profound utterance which is as follows : "There is little of which we can say for certain that it took place, and of all to which the faith of the Church especially attaches itself, the miraculous and supernatural matter in the facts and destinies of Jesus, it is far more certain that it did not take place...that the happiness of mankind is to depend upon belief at such things as these, is so absurd, that the assertion of the principle does not at the present day require any further contradiction" (*New Life of Jesus*, vol. II, p. 434). We are told India's destiny lies in this fable ! Ignorant quackery this and nothing more ! Has not India had enough of such fables and to spare ?

* What exact meaning Prof. McKenzie attaches to the term we do not presume to know. But has he not heard that Hinduism is based on three Institutes—*Prasthánas* (*S'ruti* the Upanishads, *Smriti* the Gita and Philosophy, the Brahma-sutras) by giving new interpretation to which as the time requires, it marches forward from millenium to millenium ? It is never an unalterable entity as some ignorant people presume to think. Has not the Professor heard (perhaps he has forgotten to his convenience) of big movements even in the 19th century that are its veritable New Testaments ? If foreign Christian people are actually devoid of the power of catching the spirit of a religion in the midst of which they live, they may leave the country bags and baggages, because the only noble object of sojourning in a foreign land is not to earn money, but to learn also !

in life, in works of love and mercy such as Jesus sought of His disciples" (p. 251). The renowned Vedántic scholar, Mr. Maheschandra Ghosh Vedántaratna "whose well-informed and illuminating observations," truly remarks the *Indian Messenger* of Calcutta (p. 122, March 16, 1924), "in the pages of the Modern Review month after month on the life and teachings of Jesus extort admiration even from those who do not fully agree with him," has, in reviewing the book (M. R., August, 1923), shown that Hinduism is quite capable of taking care of its philosophy of *Karma*. But what new Gospel, pray, is there in the New Testament? Is it not simply ridiculous to glibly talk of *love* and *mercy* and *humanity* and claim them to be distinctive of Christ's message while at the same time committing 99 per cent of mankind to hell-fire? What doth it avail to love a man here, to love a man there when almost the whole of humanity as God's enemies would of necessity be tormented with "weeping and gnashing of teeth" from eternity to eternity by a revengeful God with the approval of his so-called Christ, because man's first parents once showed disobedience to Him? Does this not vitiate the sense of justice at its very source? There is no way out of this unjust punishment by loving the enemy. The gospel-doctrine of the love of enemies appears to be a mockery in view of the wholesale condemnation of man—a doctrine revolting to the man of average conscience, not to speak of a sensitive heart. Does this not prove that the very opposite of "loving-kindness" is the essential characteristic of Christianity? Mr. McCabe supports us. He says: "that the Christian injunction to love your enemies because you would be rewarded for doing so, and the belief that Christ himself, as God, condemned his enemies to eternal fire, would have revolted a pagan moralist" (S. M. G., p. 300). The injunction is clear—"And these shall go away into eternal punishment" (Matt. 25[46]). This translation of the verse is, in this generation, found fault with. But it is all very nice now, after progagating Christianity for two milleniums with the help of *eternal punishment*, to question the validity of the translation. Those who cavil, forget that they hereby give a lie direct to two thousand years' history of Christianity. They also totally misunderstand the view-point of the early Christian preachers who took Jesus to be God, and in a God intellectual and moral defects, in the human sense, are counted as nothing. The worthlessness of the contention has been shown up by the Vedántaratna in the columns of the *Modern Review*, March, 1924. We only quote one more authority. Dr,

Eternal Punishment

A. Edersheim is a Jew by birth but a Christian by persuasion, a specialist in Hebrew and Greek, and unfortunately for the cavillers, a conscientious man into the bargain. He concludes the discussion by observing "that to his mind the Words of our Lord as recorded in the Gospels, convey this impression, that there *is* an eternity of punishment; and further, that this was the accepted belief of the Jewish schools, in the time of Christ." (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. II, p. 796). Bishop Colenso of Natal whose life is held by his biographer to be more momentous in its issues than perhaps any other life in the nineteenth century, was accused, among other charges, of denying the endlessness of future punishment (Cox's *Life of Bishop Colenso*, vol. I, p. 231). "We have no better ground of assurance in the happiness of heaven," exclaims his accuser, 'than for belief in the eternal miseries of hell" (p. 284). The Bishop was held guilty of the view that "the whole of mankind are recipients of God's grace." Is this not outrageous? "What then is the use of being a Christian?" (p. 285). It was very sad to contemplate, all men, black and white, would go to heaven! Is not it too heavy a burden for Christian love of humanity to bear? Dr. Carpenter does not impugn the translation, he only doubts whether it formed a part of Christ's own teaching. "But this doctrine," he is categorial, "has certainly been part of orthodox Christian teaching until recently" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 31 f. n.). In Christianity there is no provision for universal salvation, in Hinduism and Buddhism there is. Has not this distinction its natural cause? Yes, there is a psychological reason for it. It is because the love of humanity preached by Christianity is merely a doctrinal affair borrowed from somewhere, whereas the *Maitri* of Buddhism is an actual fact of experience. Even Dr. Carpenter has been obliged to admit the contrast: "The Buddhist scheme proclaims the ultimate salvation of all beings. Christianity in its most widespread historic forms still condemns an uncounted number to endless torment and unceasing sin" (Ibid p. 306).

Justice and Punishment.

And this question of the Christian sense of justice can not be let off without some observation on another aspect of it. The question of justice is vitally connected with the idea of retribution, and Christianity flies off at a tangent from it. Escape from punishment has been made a fetish by it and the mechanical scheme which practically goes by the name of Christianity has been prepared from the Roman jurisprudence to avoid the natural consquences of sin. Yes, it is too much to expect

any proper appreciation of justice from a religion the very foundation of which is laid on the abnormal desire to secure forgiveness* at any cost, even if it be by the blood of the innocent. While I am scribbling this part, a friend reading Plato by a happy coincidence reminds me that a change from the Dialogues to the gospels is a change of atmosphere which can be compared only with the change from the *Rośanárá* rose-gardens of Delhi to some rotten-fish-markets of a Bengal village. In order to justify this remark I only cite a passage giving the estimate of the Platonic idea of justice by a competent authority: "Justice is the power peculiar to the soul of man and the power by which he can attain his welfare and be happy" [*Republic*, I, 353]. "If one does injustice one should wish to be punished for it and not to escape; for injustice is the vice of the soul, and punishment is the means for eradicating the disease" [*Gorgias*, 477]. We quote the above from Dr. Whitchurch's *Cornell Studies*, no. 14, pp. 25-26. Such a divine moral sense is wholly unknown to Christianity. Place the Christian scheme of salvation by its side and the latter's inherent immorality appears too glaring to ignore.

Think of it, to visit with eternal punishment of hell-fire the iniquity of this life of very short duration where to commit a mistake is so very natural! It did not occur to the simple gospel makers that in the future life the blemishes of this life could be removed as the soul went on developing from eternity to eternity. Here was a fine opportunity to smooth over the rough edges of the Old Testament. But the gospels failed, miserably failed here as elsewhere. Yet the way was open to them if they could render a good account of it. Says Doctor Israel Abrahams about the progressive activity of the soul hereafter as found in the Rabbinic literature: "The idea was certainly known to them, for they speak of the righteous as 'going from strength to strength' in the heavenly realms until the very presence of God is reached." (*Jewish Encyclopedia*). Instead of making an advance, they went back, visibly went back upon the promises of the Old Testament. Therefore it is not because of prejudice that Jews looked upon the New Testament with an amount of suspicion. They were not unjustified in thinking that possessing the Old Testament they had nothing to learn from the New, as Montefiore has pointed out. And the same is true of its counterpart—the scheme of salvation by the blood of the innocent,—by far the most cardinal of all distinctive Christian tenets, but not less

* Vide Mr. Maheschandra Ghosh Vedántaratna's articles on the *Lord's Prayer* in the *Vedic Magazine*, April and May, 1925.

shocking to the moral susceptibilities of man and therfore not to be less condemned by all thinking men. It is time that Christians ceased to parade their religion. It will not be out of place to remind them of Hopkins' wholesome advice that "the best thing a missionary can do in India,...is to let the native scholars alone" as among the uneducated and depressed classes there is plenty of good work for him to do (*Religions of India*, p. 568). On the other hand, it is foolish to claim as is done by Christian writers, directly or indirectly, that it is only the ethics of the New Testament that put an emphasis on internal purity equally with the conformity to outward law. We do not mean to enter into details. It is very late in the day now to lay any exclusive claim to it. As this injunction can be traced to ancient Egypt and Babylon, not to speak of India and Persia, Jewry and Greece, no distinction in this respect would be allowed to any one of them. But one danger, the danger of obsession must be avoided. To identify the desire of adultery with its actual commission may, by driving the man to desperation, encourage the very crime which is its object to restrain. Its woeful consequences have already been shown from Lecky (see *supra* p. 41). Yes, this peculiarly Christian virtue, as claimed by its adherents, wholly miscarried because of its wrong direction. Says Mr. Robertson: "As always happens where sexual virtue is identified with abstinence, vice was excessive", and from the Church history he marshals facts and figures to show that the Christianised state was the "worsened copy of the pagan world and in the Christian Church survived" all the excesses of "the old Bacchanalia" (S. H. C. pp. 155-156). However, another belauded passage that can be profitably considered here is *Matt.* 25[34-46]. Here eternal life is held out as an object of temptation for succouring the distressed and the needy, otherwise the bogey of hell-fire dogs your way. The gospel morality scarcely, if ever, rises above the ethic of reward and punishment. Of course, for this passage also no originality can be claimed. The form in which the passage has been given is a simple adaptation from the ritual of the *Egyptian Book* * *of the Dead* com-

Internal Purity and External Law.

* Of this book it has been well said that "if the whole of the Christian literature had been extinguished in Europe, these Egyptian remains would provide for us a complete moral outfit"—a simple practical code of moral maxims for every-day life in which "we shall find the moral sentiment attaining the Christian level and coming down from an age when even the Jews were a barbarous tribe of the desert" (S. M. G., pp. 31-32).

posed ages ago for the same purpose, and originally it did not form a part of the sayings of Jesus either. This disclosure takes away a great deal even from its sentimental value. It is a development of a Messianic saying, "he that receiveth you receiveth me (Matt. 10^{40}) introduced into the gospel-text by an unknown hand. Yet about this passage Dr. William Sanday, in the teeth of opposition from eminent scholars, naively interrogates: "Where is the second brain that could have invented anything so original and so sublime as vv. 35-40, 42-5" (*The Life of Christ*, p. 128), carefully omitting the vs. 41 and 46 where the major portion of humanity are sent to eternal hell and from whom Jesus purposely withheld his *heaven-going* teachings (vide Mk. 4^{11-12}, Mt. 13^{10-15}, Lk. 8^{9-10}), prompted perhaps by the love of enemies of the Christian brand? This surely is original, because Judaism knew no "Unpardonable Sin" (*The Pharisees*, p. 167). Mr. Loisy says that it has been visibly arranged to close the compilation of discourses and parables by the redactor of the first Gospel. If by the phrase "one of these my brethren" is meant "one of the faith" its ethical value would be infinitely reduced. On the other hand, this motivated benevolence of the gospels does not reach even the outskirts of *Visva-maitri* with which the world was familiarised by the great Gautama Buddha more than five hundred years before the Christian era. "Think of all creatures", (taught the great Master and he realised it in practical life) "with such a heart of unlimited love that prompts the mother to save an only son at the cost of her life"* (*Sutta-nipata*, 149.) Even Christ's legendary *forgiveness* as embodied in "Father, forgive them", *Lk.* 23^{34}) is not at par with this. Though this utterance on the cross is an interpolation in the Bible, we see such forgiveness actualised in the life of the great Buddha. When the Master was practising *Yoga* on a bed of human skulls (the veritable "golgotha"), we learn this from the autobiographical portion of *Mahásihanáda Suttam* of *Majjhima-nikáya*, he thought not evil of

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* माता यथा नियं पुत्तं आयुसा एकं पुत्तं अनुरक्खे ।
एवम्पि सब्बभूतेसु मानसं भावये अपरिमाणं ॥ (*Metta-sutta*, 7)

"As, recking nought of self, a mother's love
Enfolds and cherishes her only son,
So through the world let thy compassion move
And compass living creatures every one,
Soaring and sinking in unfettered liberty,
Free from ill-will, purged of all enmity!"

(*The Heart of Buddhism* by K. J. Saunders).

those who inflicted personal injuries on him In the dialogue between Buddha and Punna it is related in the *Sanjuttanikáya* (translated for the first time from the original Páli for the *Brahmavádi* of Barisál, Chaitra, 1329 B. S., by Mr. Maheshchandra Vedántaratna, that the disciple caught the spirit of the master so well as to be able to look upon the actual murderer with an eye of love The Prahlád of *Vishnupurána* prayed for the life of those who before his very eyes were preparing to kill him. The invented forgiveness on the cross can scarcely be said to be an improvement upon it. Yet Rev. Bhai Pratap Chandra Majumdar in his *Oriental Christ*, a book of which the sale in America is said to be less than that of the Bible only, after enthusiastically discussing the prayer on the cross, concludes by asking: "Can ideal forgiveness go any further ?" Bankim Chandra in his *Dharmatattva* accepting the challenge points to Prahlad and says. "Yes, ideal certainly goes." Once the superstition prevailed that Christ was real and Prahlád ideal. But now we find the two in the same boat, both manufactured for edification only. One word more. The scholarly opinion is overhelmingly large and it is daily gathering in strength and volume that the prayer "Father, forgive them they know not what they do," found only in Luke 23[34] suspicious enough on that score alone, is an interpolation as omitted by most ancient manuscripts, thereby proving the Christian ethics of forgiveness to be based on a forged authority. The brightest jewel in the crown of the New Testament Ethic thus turns out to be a spurious article. This question has been in a threadbare way discussed by W. B. Smith in the *American Encyclopedia* and also in the *Open Court*, 1912. In his *Ecce Deus*. p 144, he says : "The tenderly human traits belong to the later form of the Gospel, and are sometimes even interpolations as in the case of the famous prayer on the Cross." His contention of course is that the Gospel-Jesus was at the outset something like our *Pauranic god* as Yahweh is in the Old Testament, and the human traits were afterwards added. "It is," observes Paul Carus, "not genuine and must have been superadded to the text in later editions" (*Open Court*, 1912). Mr. McCabe remarks: "Supremely typical of Christ, conservative theologians say: but the evidence of their being late interpolations in the Gospel is strong to compel divines who are not regarded as liberal to surrender them." (*S. M. G.* p. 167). Yes, truth is triumphant even over orthodox conservatism. The Revised Version, Lachmann's Edition and the

Prayer on the Cross an Invention

Twentieth Century New Testament have all rejected the passage So also the Encyclopedia Biblica. According to Wellhausen "without any doubt interpolated" (O. C. 1912). The German savant Keim in his *Jesus of Nazara* (vol. vi, p. 155) and Estlin Carpenter in his *First Three Gospels* (pp. 25 and 293) have come to the same conclusion. Dr. Martineau too has expressed doubt in his *Seat of Authority in Religion* (p. 710), and Moutefiore holds : "almost certainly not authentic" (p. 143). Bishop Westcott, the leading member of the New Testament Revision Company, in the introduction to his Greek Testament executed (1881) in collaboration with Dr. Hort and welcomed as an epoch-making book "probably the most important contribution to Biblical learning in our generation" (*Life of Bishop Westcott*, p. 398) has strenuously defended this opinion and the Bishop is an orthodox *Padre* as we know him.

From another standpoint the passage can be shown outlandish in the gospels. That the man who at the slightest opposition, real or imaginary, from the Pharisees flew to a rage and villified them in unmeasured terms, no abusive language being found too strong to apply to them, would pray for them when they were actually killing him, seems to be a psychological puzzle and this psychological difficulty indicates the non-historical character of the whole account ! Therefore I have not been at all astonished to find a marginal note in my copy of the New Testament, read and marked 30 years ago when I had my first instructions in the Bible, to the effect that the passage is a "mystery" if it "happened to Jesus." I then surmised that it was a forgery on the part of Luke who from Paul heard of the dying utterance of Stephen, and put it in the modified form to the credit of Jesus. But I am actually surprised to find myself in a way substantiated by Robinson Smith who writes : "Lk. 23-34 reproduces Jesus' brother James' dying words as recorded by Hegesippus *Commentaries* (quoted by Eusebius, H. E. 2. 23) : 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' " (*The Solution of the Synoptic Problem*, p. 239). Professor Eberhard Nestle presumes to contend (O. C., 1912), why shall we not assume that Stephen and James followed Jesus ? W. B. Smith's reply is that the passage is not found in the oldest MSS., both Greek and Syriac, and therefore it must be taken as an interpolation. When Luke's gospel had taken form and become current some copyist must have interpolated it in some MSS., but it was impossible to insert in all the MSS. So it is found in many MSS., no doubt, but wholly wanting

in the very oldest. (Ibid). To those readers who can read Bengali I recommend the discussion on the subject by the Vedántaratna published in the Bengali Monthly **Pravási,** in its Vaisákh and Jaistha (1831 B. S.) issues, a free translation of its conclusion we give here. He gives the following reasons why he considers the verse an interpolation : (1) The verse is not found in the most ancient life of Jesus ; (2) wanting in the oldest manuscripts of Luke ; (3) also in the oldest translations ; (4) most authoritative Biblical scholars reject it as an interpolation ; (5) the whole life of Jesus gives a lie direct to such a prayer for enemies ; (6) the prayer was interpolated (*a*) to placate the Jews that Jesus was the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy, (*b*) to give the heathen world to understand that the Christian God was not behind-hand in the pagan virtue of forgiveness, (*c* to console the Christians that Jesus showed the way to Stephen and James. Subsequently the Vedántaratna reverted to the subject also in the *Modern Review*, September, 1924.

It will not be out of place here to remark that this interpolation has an Old Testament motive also, as in Isaiah (3^{12}) we find : 'he made intercession for the transgressors." It may be added in corroboration of the above contention that Jesus' virgin birth had to be manufactured because of a misunderstanding of a Hebrew word. Rev. Dr. Leighton Parks, Rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York, points out (*Statesman* 8-1-24) : "The best scholars (e. g. Harnack) tell us that the word used by Isaiah in his prophecy means a young married woman. This was wrongly translated into Greek as meaning a virgin (*vide also The First Three Gospels*, p. 118). Rajarshi Rammohan has elaborately dealt with the subject and spotted out the source of the mistake. It is the Septuagint that is at the root of the evil. And the gospel-writers were conversant with this Greek translation only and not with the original in Hebrew (see *infra* Chap. xviii a). And the idea occurred very late. In both *Matthew* and *Luke*, where only the Virgin Birth is described, we find two different genealogies of Joseph whom they must have taken to be the father of Jesus. St. Paul said that Jesus was born of the "seed of David after flesh". So, by implication, it is contended, Paul did not speak of the gospel-Jesus. To the challenge of the Bishop of London : "Prove that the Virgin Birth was not taught in the Holy Scripture," it is replied "that the chapters in which it is taught are very late additions to the books of which they now form part. The Bishop must know that the Virgin Birth story in *Luke* is written in a totally different

Virgin Birth.

style of Greek from that in which the remainder of the gospel is written, and that there is a great deal of evidence to show that the original *Matthew* contained no such story" (Jocelyn Rhys in *The Literary Guide*, Feb. 1925). However, this is one other evidence that Jesus' life was fabricated out of the Old Testament prophecies.

Addendum—*Anent* the misrepresentation of Judaism in the gospels; *supra* p. 47. Here is another instance. In order to show the superiority of the New Testament *Matthew* (5^{38}) says: "Ye have heard that it was said"...the reference apparently is to *Exodus* 21^{24-25}. Rev. Travers Herford shows that the Pharisees did not enforce it. "The Ethics of the Halachah is not identical with the ethics of the Old Testament, and the change from one to the other was deliberately made, even to the extent sometimes of annulling some precept laid down in Scripture". The above law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is an instance. The Gospel-writer was unaware that it "was replaced by the enactment of a fine in money as the penalty for inflicting an injury (M. B. Kamma, viii, 1). The change, whenever it was made, is a clear proof of the growth of a humaner feeling since the original law was framed, and the Halachah marks that progress. It is quite unjust to charge against the Pharisees, or the Rabbis or the modern Jews, that their religion still maintains the old *lex talionis*" (*The Pharisees*, pp 111—112). In a *footnote* the learned author shows that even if the Sadducees enforced it in the literal sense, their judicial code was abrogated in the reign of Queen Alexandra (78—69 B. C. E.), so it then ceased to be enforced "fully a century before the time of Jesus. It may have ceased long before, and it may never have been operative at all.". Mr. Abrahams also contends: "*No single instance of its application is on record*" (Ph. and G., 1st Series, p. 154). Yet the gospel speaks of it as if it were then still being taught by Judaism! But on the infallibility of the Christian Scriptures human salvation must be staked, and taking its cue from these false statements Christianity has evolved its scorn of the Jew and the Jewish thought.

The *Corban* passage (Mark 7^{8}) may be cited as an other example. This is a retort by Jesus to a question put by the Pharisees—a retort accompanied indeed by "Ye, hypocrites." Herford informs us, if the Pharisees' reply had been recorded, it would have been a damaging one," because "Jesus really was ignorant of Pharisaic Halachic teaching" (p. 207).

c. Each Tree is known by its own Fruits. *Luke* 6[44].

The orthodox Brahmins occupied exactly the same position in India at the time of Buddhadeva as the Pharisees at the commencement of the Christian movement in Judea. The harsh and unjust treatment the Pharisees received at the hand of Jesus pains every spiritually-minded man more for Jesus than for his opponents. To come to Buddha is a great relief from the perpetual bickerings and fault-findings, execrations and vituperations that Jesus scatters around him at the slightest opposition whatever its nature—whether a question put by the opponent, or fear or suspicion expressed by the companion. In point of divine serenity of temper Jesus, as we know him from the gospels, can in no way enter into comparison with Buddha. Once a Brahmin accused the latter of impiety and found fault with his Order. The disciples were angered. "Brethren" said Gautama, "if outsiders should speak against me, or against the Order, you should not on that account be angry and hurt; that would stand in the way of your own self-conquest. If, when others speak against us, you feel angry at that and displeased, would you then be able to judge how far that speech of theirs is well said or ill?" He warns them not to be lifted up in heart when one speaks in praise. This is on all fours with the Gita saying: न प्रहृष्येत् प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत् प्राप्य चाप्रियम्। He also advises to simply show the truth or otherwise of the assertion by calm reasoning or by reference to facts (*Brahmajāla Suttam, Digha Nikáya*). For such an enlightened moral sentiment so nobly expressed, one in vain searches all the corners of the four gospels. "St. Paul's Anathema on those who differed from him sounds very weak beside it" as Rhys Davids remarks. Here another figure shining in all his pristine glory comes across our path, whom none can pass over without paying the meed of homage his due. He drank the bitter cup literally, never faltering for a moment nor trying to evade it in any manner, and met the sentence of death with a calm resignation before which the cross pales into insignificance. How does Jesus' cry on the cross: "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" compare with the calm dignified utterance of Socrates: "you go to live and I to die, which is better God only knows"? (*Apology* 41). If all the agonies Jesus suffered at the apprehension of the approaching death could be brought to the notice of Socrates, how would he pity him? One day some friends of Socrates resented the incivility of a man towards him; but Socrates calmly remonstrated with them saying

Buddha, Socrates and Jesus.

that "if there is nothing to anger you when a man is not physically well-equipped, pray then what greater reason can you have, for being incensed at a man for a worse habit of mind than any of yourselves" (p. 350, *Moral and Religious Anecdotes* by Rev. G. Cheevers. Vide Xenophon, Chap. xiii, Bk. iii). This reminds us of him of Kapilávastu and him alone. The Greek sage died with words on his lips of a higher and nobler type of forgiveness—forgiveness that altogether denies the existence of evil done to him: "I bear no ill will toward my condemners or with my accusers, they have done no harm," a forgiveness that is an eternal fact* and not an event of the passing moment. Socrates was offered opportunities to evade his fate, but he refused. Jesus, on the other hand, not only taught his disciples to the effect: "when they persecute you, flee ye into another" (Mt. 10[23]), but himself acted accordingly (vide Jn. 8[59]; 7[10]; 10[39]; Mt. 4[12]; Mk. 3[7]). And Jesus did not throw away pearls to the swine. Both precepts and example took effect as attested by the doings of his disciples (Vide the *Acts* 14,[6] 17[10], and 17[14]). Again, compare the inner significance of Jesus' death with that of Socrates and find out its moral. The former's death is taken to be an act of great sacrifice. But Jesus could not meet his death so calmly and resignedly as Socrates, so for those who believe him to be a Saviour, the crucifixion is emptied of all its sacrificial character. Breathes there a creature, however low, in the four corners of the world who will not be ready to die with the consciousness to rise from the grave on the third day to wear a crown for all eons? But real self-sacrifice bears quite a different stamp on its forehead. Jesus was not a willing sacrifice! "There is self-sacrifice," observes Mr. E. S. P. Haynes, the late scholar of Balliol College, (*Religious Persecution*, p. 72) "of the purest kind in the death of a Socrates, suffered in a homely fashion, merely for refusing to repudiate the inner voice that guided him". So the following saying could not be improved upon

* Here the reader's attention is invited to some uncalled-for strictures (as to the shameless falsity of these strictures, please refer to Zeller's *Socrates*, p. 62) on the character of Socrates by Giovani Papini in his *Story of Christ*, p. 343. The writer evidently finding himself beyond his depths with his Christ when confronted by the formidable adversary, Socrates, has adopted the common logic: "No case abuse the plaintiff's attorney." This famous author begins by villifying the Greek sage as the flat-nosed son of a midwife who bored people in the market-place. How the other party has retaliated will be apparent from F. C. Baur's *Church History* vol. II, p. 143, *Encyclopedia Biblica*, col. 2968., A. T. Robertson's *The Pharisee and Jesus*, p. 55, Klausner's *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 23, etc., etc.

even if it were intended by way of joke : "yes, if the death of Socrates be that of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God" (As quoted in *the Life of Christ* by Dr. Cunningham Geikie, p. 2). Dr. G. S. Hall suggests that Jesus' act signifies rather an "egoistic selfishness", because the cross is here the price of a crown (*Jesus, the Christ*, p. ix). This, of course, consists with the general tenor of the New Testament morality. Now those who regard Jesus to be a man, pure and simple, are in the sad predicament to take him for a visionary believing in impossible things that a maniac only can believe. The cross failed but the Greek culture still holds its sway over the so-called Christian civilization. It passes one's understanding how in the face of all this, except on the ground of sheer theological prejudice and perversion of history, an eminent theologian like Weinel, as Drews has pointed out, can claim that Jesus first set the example of the love of neighbour as the 'supreme principle of moral conduct' (*Witnesses*, p. 269). However, what we have said above is a sufficient answer to J. Weiss' query: "Where in the world, is there a Jewish writing or a Jewish community that has ever made love of one's enemy a fundamental rule of commerce ? And wherever it has been put in practice—whence came the impulse, who inspired men thereto ? The Talmud, or the Old Testament or the figure of him who sealed his word on the Cross ?" (W. H. J. p. 269). No man with any sense of history can accept the above estimate about Jesus. Nor, on the other hand, do we find any truth in Schmiedel's estimate also when he says: "What we ought to feel grateful to Jesus for, is that he was destined for the first time to make the ideas take effect and influence the lives of mankind in general" (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p. 87. The Professor makes a twofold blunder here,—first, "the ideas" have never taken effect in Christendom, we undertake to prove ; and, next, he is awfully in the dark about the doings of Buddha and Buddhism. In order to match these unrestricted and unauthorised panegyrics on the ethical principles of Jesus, we cite only one another German scholar—believer, all the same, in the historicity. Schneider in his *Kultur* says : "Jesus is not the highest and freest personality of history, but only the highest in ancient Judaism, restricted and not free in comparison with the greatest Greek thinkers. If, in spite of this, he had succeeded to their heritage with his ethic, he owes this to his *reactionary charaeter*" (*Witnesses*, p. 289), because, McCabe has shown, the Platonic system was impossible to many on account of its high

Christian Claims historically unjustified.

theological implications, while the logical rigidity of Aristotle's ethics confined it to a narrow circle. But, to cut the gordian knot, one may safely maintain that any high moral teachings, properly so called, as compiled in the name of Jesus, were quite foreign to the genius of the primitive Christianity both theoretical and practical, as Mr. Robertson points out: "The whole known history of the cult tells against the hyphothesis that it ever centred round those teachings which to-day specially appeal to the ethical rationalist. Such teachings are more likely to be adventitious than fundamental, in a cult of sacrificial salvation" (*A Short History of Free Thought*, vol. I, p. 222).

No Social Service by Christianity proper.

One thing can not be too often insisted upon—that the success of Christianity should not be estimated by what we find in post-Renaissance Europe. It is absolutely no creation of that creed. If love of man took effect after Jesus, why was there no social service properly so called in pre-Renaissance Christendom? And, to judge the tree by its fruits, if love of man possessed the Christian heart, the diabolical doctrine of eternal hell would be impossible of invention. In practice quite opposite was the case. History shows, Christianity on that account supplied no fixed principle of peace; in Europe it was always a force that made for war. If Christianity excelled in anything it was in the disparagement of woman and in organised cruelty to men encouraged by the Church itself with the ostensible purpose of eradicating heresy. What a commendable example of social service generated by love of humanity which took effect for the first time in history! It is a superstition to hold that Christianity moved toward the progress of women. Among the Teutons it perhaps did a great disservice in that respect. Lunatics were cruelly scourged, because they were possessed. Luther advised to throw a possessed child to the river and shun the lepers because they incurred the vengeance of God for sin. The pagans held a saner view. Of course, there were heresies. The religious manumission of slaves was an imitation of pagan practice, as the institution itself was taken over from them. The Church encouraged the manumission on economical grounds—one man *freed* was one head more to pay the tithes. The life and teaching of St. Francis of Assisi is much made of and it should be. But the heart of such a good man, the flower of medieval Christianity, was so much paralysed by the creed that even he could not raise his voice of protest against the horrible Albigensian crusades. Though written by many hands, *Imitatio Christi* is attributed to Thomas à

Kempis. We should not be misled by the traditional praise of the book. Its ideal is to emphasise duty to God and not duty to man, seclusion and not social life. Guided by the *Imitatio* many people lived a stoic life. But Stoicism made for good government, no such result is recorded in favour of the medieval Christianity. Says a Christian historian, Finlay: "To the disgrace of most Christian governments it will be found that their administration was more oppressive than that of the Arabian conquerors". Then of Eckhart and his disciple, Tauler—the former is a scholar and the latter almost a misanthrope, their movements aiming at some kind of communism. "If thou wouldst have the Creator", says Tauler, "thou must forego the creature, the less of the creature, the more of God. Therefore abjure all creatures, with all their consolations." This can not be an outburst of a heart imbued with the milk of human love. I am rather reminded of the anti-social injunction of our Smriti : वासैकं तक्षतो बाहुं चन्दनेनैकमुक्षतः। नाकल्याणं न कल्याणं तयोरपि च चिन्तयेत् ॥ *Vishnu, 96.23*—If one chops off one hand or one besmears the other with sandal-wood paste give not thought to the good or evil of either. Savonarola may be referred to, but his too was a fanatical appeal to individual conscience. So lacking reason he lacked abiding force, therefore failed. No permanent good can come out of a movement unless it is backed by social science. We have learnt it at our cost from the failure of the gigantic Gándhi movement.

Neither Individual nor Corporate.

Now to turn from personalities to corporate activities. We only mention two or three. First, the Inquisition, the systematic atrocities of which can be paralleled only by the practices of witch finders among savages. Protestant lands, on the other hand, burned as many women for the imaginary charge of witchcraft* as many men the Inquisition did to death for heresy. If the merit of Christianity is estimated by witch-slaying—the blood shed in consequence of this one criminal mania alone would place it lower than any religion in the world, savage religions not exempted, in as much as it was an agency to provoke strife and slaughter, never exerting to restrain them. Christianity turned men into savages without the savage virtues. About the Crusade the less said, the better ; only to refer to the wars of religion would be a heavy task from which we purposely refrain. All these were wars in the name of

* "If I were to take a census of opinion in all the four villages of my parish, I am certain I should find a majority seriously professing belief in witchcraft.—The Rev. Charles Kent." *The Literary Guide*, June, 1926.

Christianity. But when the Emperor Aśoka adopted Buddhism "he waged no more war" (Carpenter, *Buddhism and Christianity*, p 17). Bishop Copleston may speak slightingly of virtues 'outside' Christianity, but, pray, is there anything like the above inside the Christian fold ? The Emperor Constantine gave imperial sanction to the Church, but postponed his baptism till death approached as he could not give up vices. Religion is a form and not life ! There is not a single imaginable crime that these Christian savages did not, in the name of their religion, perpetrate against humanity; the love of neighbour is a far cry. Mosheim has been obliged to admit that in the crusades the Christians were more ferocious than the Saracens. And the whole of Christendom was at the back of these crusades. In two centuries about five millions of the crusaders lost their lives by disease, by debauchery and by killing one another. When a fraction returned to their homeland, they formed the institution of the Order of the Knights Templars which was, for its filthy lucre, extirpated by Christian plot and treachery. Thus the drama ended, as it began, in hatred and crime. Now in the twentieth century we are told, love of men was never more effectively illustrated as after Christ ! At comparatively recent times both Roman Catholics and Protestants hated each other with such a mortal hatred that even a cultured More or a spiritual Calvin could show no capacity of gentle spirit towards the opponents. Now, we shall not probably be far astray if we conclude that the cult of the Bible never helped the cause of peace on earth and good-will among men. Yes, there is no more travesty of history than that Christianity is called 'a religion of love.' As a scrap of paper the Gospel contains, no doubt, the theoretical teaching of the love of enemies, but in practical life Christianity was never able to produce in its adherents a modicum of the divine virtue of enduring a difference of doctrinal belief even in one's own father (vide *A Short History of Christianity*). Granting for argument's sake that Jesus conceived an ethic of tolerably high order as is given in the gospels, the question of questions arises whether he ever cared to carry it into effect. Did Jesus himself make it a rule of conduct, fundamental or otherwise ?* Did he ever seriously put to

Jesus himself did no better.

* "I don't think that he was always consistent. He urged his disciples to love their enemies, but so far as we can judge he showed little love to those who opposed him. He urged that the lost sheep should be actively sought out; but except in the way of sheer abuse and bitter vituperation, he did nothing to win over to his

the crucial test of practice what he is credited with having preached ? Never : that is the universal reply from all careful and impartial readers of the Bible. Friedlander's contention that "the gospels give no instance of any love shown by Jesus to his opponents" (J. S., p. 72) remains unchallenged. That his practice is inconsistent with the teachings ascribed to him did not fail to attract the notice of the editors of the gospels who by their glosses tried to minimise the offensiveness of his conduct. It is said Jesus forbade anger "without a cause" (*Matt.* 5²²), though every reader of the Bible is at every step struck by Jesus' anger with friend and foe alike. The Revised Version reveals the fact that the qualification "without a cause" was added by some interpolator in order to soften this *Durvásá* trait of Jesus' character.

But Buddha did.

But look at this picture and that ! While presiding over the Buddha *Jayanti* celebrations, (Bombay, as reported by Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21st May, 1924), Mahátmá Gándhi gave out the very truth when he categorically asserted that "Buddha taught us also how to do it [*i. e.*, to love others] because he lived what he taught" which we sadly miss in Jesus. His utter lack of love of humanity for its own sake, or that his love did not extend beyond his limited circle—is proved by the reason he gave why he spoke in parables : "Unto them that are without, all things are done in parables : that seeing they may see and not perceive.........lest haply they should repent and their sins should be forgiven them." (*Mark*, 4 ¹¹⁻¹²). Here an inexplicable anxiety is shown revealing a very curious mentality,—lest other people should profit by his teaching, and consequently they would escape the fate of becoming

own conception of religion the Pharisees and Rabbis who ventured to criticise and dislike him. To the hardest excellence of all even Jesus could not attain." (*The Religions Teaching of Jesus*, p. 53). Where Jesus failed, Buddha and Socrates had already succeeded. It does not require much logic to understand that to combat this pagan virtue the Christian forger introduced the prayer on the cross. However, Montefiore's above quoted estimate of Jesus is valuable for two reasons—he is extremely reluctant to be harsh upon Jesus and wound Christian susceptibilities, and he takes the hero of the gospels to be "the spiritual descendant and successor of Amos and Isaiah" (p. 47). Jesus' love was actuated by the most reprehensible form of self-approbation. He could love the outcast or the harlot if they would accept him as the Messiah. If a Rabbi had the hardihood to oppose him, why, all love was gone he was a child of perdition. Not love but woe unto him ! The opponent, whoeve he be, must be visited with weeping and gnashing of teeth, being cast out into oute darkness. (*Matt.* 8¹²).

so many 'fuels' of hell-fire. Is this then the culmination of the much-vaunted love of enemies? In this country the tradition has it that Vishnu incarnated as the Buddha in order to purposely lead people astray. Why, because if all people seek salvation in the right path, the *samsára* (world) could not be kept agoing and Yamarájá's occupation would be gone. Jesus seems to be some such incarnation of the Vishnu of popular belief. Really, the weight of the universal love of humanity seems to have been too much for him to bear. If he were a universalist, then what about his saying: "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"* and "it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs" (*Matt.* 15^{24-26}; Mk. 7^{27}) with its sting in the tail *i. e.*, his contemptuous treatment of the Syro-Phœnician woman†; his refusal to allow his disciples to go

* This spiteful narrowness of Jesus is unceremoniously put to shame by Cicero's glorious doctrine of the universal fellowship of the human race who taught: "we should wish the good of every man, *whoever he may be*, for this very reason that he is a man" (*On Duties*). In this Stoic world, we are told, a Jesus of Nazareth introduced a newer and higher ethic; new it might be in its crudities, but higher? That is a blasphemy. This point that man should be treated as man because he is man had already been reached by Aristotle. For when reproached for doing a good deed to a reprobate, he answered: "Not to the man but to the human" (E. D. p. 127). In what a terrible plight, however, Christianity found itself in the then Stoic atmosphere is evident from the forged correspondence between Paul and Seneca where some plausibility was worked up to the effect that the latter was a borrower from the former. But one swallow does not make a spring. And Seneca was not the only height to scale. This Stoic ideal of equality of all men in the eye of law Christendom tried to imitate, but incorporated only in the abstract. How far, in spite of its boast of superior moral life, Christianity has succeeded in applying it to actual facts of life, we Indians know at our cost.

† None can imagine that except in the mood of supreme cynicism one can take this episode to clothe Jesus with the grandeur of international sympathy. What is the fact? Jesus at first gives his considered verdict that the children's meat should not be given to the dog The dog still persists, as is his wont, and the Christ relents, though this latter part of the story is taken by some scholars to be a later interpolatory addition by a pro-Gentile hand. However it may be, it is an ordinary occurrence that we at the outset repel an unworthy beggar, but being unable to resist the renewal of the importunate onset, we at last grant some dole, perhaps admiring the importunacy. Has any body ever dreamt of taking this as a sign of a high degree of our fraternisation with him or her? Even Dr. Martineau has spoken of the passage as an ebullition of scorn and hatred" (S. of A. 5th Ed. p. 658) In view of this one wonders how Dr. Geikie could make the following remark: "He [Jesus] stripped religion, for the first time, from the bands and fetters of nationality" (*Life and Words of Christ*, vol. I. p. 581), in a serious mood and not by way of joke. Irony indeed!

and preach the gospel to the Gentiles and the Samaritans. On the other hand how one explains his execrations on the places that would not be converted ; his unreasonably revengeful act of cursing‡ the fig tree which forthwith dried up ; then his performing lots of miracles after his word of honour that he would give none to the wicked and adulterous generation, (of course, in which generation Jesus himself was born !) ; his anger against, and ill-tempered rebuke of the Pharisees and scribes in terms ("fools," "hypocrites" etc.) which he forbade in others ; sending Chorazin and Bethsada to perdition ; and the hate that breathes in "Ye broods of vipers" or "your father the devil" ? The above is not indeed an exhaustive inventory. This is, then, how the *preacher* gave effect to what he preached. Let us now take stock how it took effect among *whom* it was preached. It is expected that modern theologians will not commit the mistake of the early Christian writers that until Christ came, the nations of the world were enshrouded "in the shadow of death." That superstition has already been dissipated. Fifteen hundred years before the present era the Mediterranean world between Alexandria and Corinth where the gospels were written, was practising an ethics than which the gospel morality can not without violence to truth be said to be better ; and for fifteen centuries after the era began, scarcely any thought was given to the moral teaching, the legends of the supernatural power were made all in all, and the followers were so prfoundly influenced by the 'word that was sealed on the cross' that they busied themselves with the stake and rack to compel one another to profess a creed against their conscience that they might be saved from the imaginary torments of an equally imaginary eternal hell. On the other side of the shield we find the promised Holy Spirit brooding over Europe patronising the celibate clergy with its innumerable monasteries and nunneries notorious for sexual license, so much so that an old priest is said to have reasoned : "If the Catholic Church were not divine, the sins of its clergy [in whom certainly the gospel morality took effect, thanks to Jesus !] would have destroyed it ages ago." (*The Sources*, p. 15) When were then the ideas fully assimilated by mankind in general during this millenium and a half for which Mr. Schmiedel is grateful to Jesus ? Protestantism repudiated the Church as "the whore

Christian Fanaticism.

‡ In this act Jesus is an adept. "He curses with a singular fluency which" McCabe remarks, "is not recorded of any other great moralist" (*S. M. G.* p. 18).

of Babylon," knowing full well that the "ideas" could fructify nowhere outside the Church. Before that Islam had risen and struck, and struck so hard that Christianity for the life of it hurriedly began to set her house in order. But for this attack from Islam, Christianity with its soul-killing rituals would have still been wallowing in the most abject form of idolatry the world has ever witnessed. Blinded by the glamour of modern civilisation theologians think that Christ has done a great service to humanity. The Bengali adage says : "the crane is killed by storm but the *dervish* takes all the credit". It was the return of the Greco-Roman culture formerly driven by Christian fanatics from Europe to take shelter at Bagdad, Cordova etc.,—the Islamic seats of culture, that set Europe free from the trammels of a superstitious religion. Europe at last came to her own, not for Christianity but in spite of it. Even Martin Luther said, had not Aristotle been of blood and flesh he would have called him antichrist. Was not at the beginnng of the thirteenth century the study of Aristotle in the university vetoed in a council held at Paris ? And the other side of the picture is as gloomy. As soon as the Protestants came to power they began to kill the Catholics right and left showing one more example how beautifully the forgiveness preached on the cross took effect. No, it is useless to look to the cross for the purpose. There is much truth, then, in the words of McCabe : "No distinguished moralist who is known to history ever failed so completely in his aim" (S. M. G. p. 86). Verily, if one is to see how the teaching of forgiveness really takes root in the soil even without the false exhortations—the kingdom is at hand, or the end of the world is near; and also without the shopkeeper's low incentive—great is thy reward in heaven—one is to come to India. The Master himself, the actual embodiment of the idea, with whom the term enemy scarcely has any meaning—*maitri* knowing no enemies—taught his disciples a lesson and set an example that worked for two milleniums. "Throughout the long history of Buddhism, which is the history of more than half the people in the world for more than two thousand years, the Buddhists have been uniformly tolerant," *Buddhism*, p. 116, (American Lectures). "We have not a single instance" continues Rhys-Davids, the late lamented authority on the subject, "throughout the whole period, of even one of those religious persecutions which loom so largely in the history of the Christian Church," reverence to the Brahmins finding an honoured place in the famous edicts of Aśoka. But like the proverbial Christian

Buddhist Toleration unparalleled.

charity how beautifully, does Christian forgiveness also operate even to-day ! Only the other day the Christian protestants raised a howl against the British king's paying a visit of courtesy to the Pope of Rome. The canker is at the source. Forbearance is a quality conspicuous by its absence in Jesus as he is depicted in the gospels. Neither do we find any trace of it in the Christian history. After this, when a writer comes parading forgiveness as exclusively a Christian virtue, it can have only one effect : it excites derision and sneer. Says the Rev. J. R. Dummelow in his *Commentary on the Holy Bible* (p. 647) : "No one who has not forgiven his enemies can pray the Lord's Prayer, which is another proof that it is meant for Christians alone. To forgive one's enemies is the act of a Christian and the very opposite of the way of the world". I am almost tempted to remark that it is beneath one's intellectual dignity to take any notice of this Christian gibberish.

Regenerating Influence of Christianity !

It then comes to this : Far from giving a practical shape to it, Christianity stultified the precept of forgiveness and of love of enemies that was already current in the world. This creed undermines the very conception of human brotherhood by inculcating the doctrine that a man's erroneous belief in a particular respect in this life sends him to eternal perdition, be he a Jew or heathen or Christian heretic, thereby exciting mortal hatred between man and man, and between community and community ? It only succeeded in bringing out the animal in man. "From the orthodox themselves we know how Pope Leo had banished and imprisoned the Manichæans and Pelagians [two Christian heretical sects] who sought refuge at Rome when the Vandals attacked Carthage. The Emperors exhibit the process of decivilization. Valentinian died of rage ; his pious sons were weaklings ; and Theodosius, when the rabble of Thessalonica braved him by murdering his governor for enforcing the law against a popular charioteer, treacherously planned a systematic and indiscriminate massacre by which there perished from seven to fifteen thousand men, women and children. [Does any Christian state after a millenium and a half show any sign of improvement ? The European wars of the twentieth century tell a most deplorable tale !] No pagan emperor had ever done the like ; and no such number of Christians can have been put to death by Nero. Heraclius, after beheading Phocas, sent his head and limbs to be dragged through the streets of Constantinople—a reversion to barbarism. [Disinterment of the Mádhi's corpse is a modern parallel]. Two centuries earlier (415) a rabble of Alexandrian monks, acting in the interests of

Cyril the Patriarch, seized the pagan teacher Hypatia, stripped her, tore her flesh from bones with shells, and burned the remains. It is one of the anomalies of historiography," concludes the discriminating author of *A Short History of Christianity*, "that a moral rebirth of the world shall have been held to begin in an age in which such things could be" (pp. 154-155). What about the Christianised barbarians? Why, "their religion seeming only to make them more savage and vicious"! What is the characteristic ethical content of the Christian system, what is the moral doctrine by which the Church has been distinguished even in our day when only it is on the point of being repudiated? Is it not the most immoral doctrine of redemption of mankind by a blood sacrifice—"a survival of immemorial savagery"—as Robertson has called it? In spite of the inspiration drawn all these two thousand years from the unique personality on the cross, are people claiming higher civilization and superior *Kultur* any the better for the Jesuine ethics? Let the last world-war and its after-math reply! The Buddhistic Nippon came out infinitely more honourably in her dealings with the fallen foe. Yes, the Christian claim is a wholly unfounded pretension. "So far I am aware, the only explicit condemnation passed in the German Reichstag on the German submarine policy," says Mr. Robertson, "has been delivered by the Socialist Adolf Hoffmann, a professed Freethinker. He pronounced it "shameful", and was duly called to order," and it is in Germany that "there are more systematic students of the gospels than in all the rest of Europe" (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 228). From the chorus of indignation expressed in the columns of the *Times* by the public of England against Dean Inge's sermon preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, to the delegates of the International Peace Conference, and that for the Dean's supreme offence of once trying to adapt the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount to the modern conditions, Professor Schmiedel is to see how beautifully the moral precepts have been made to take effect even on the leading nation in Christendom! A sample of how the early Christians so very near "the figure of him who sealed his word on the cross", (and they therefore had a better opportunity to be inspired) made love of one's enemy a fundamental rule of conduct is given below: "How I shall admire" ejaculates the pious Father of the Church in anticipation, in his *On Spectacles*, "how I shall laugh and be delighted when I hear so many proud Cæsars whining in the deepest abyss of darkness. From seeing and rejoicing over these,

no prœtor, no consul, no quæstor and no priest can prevent us." So, it is not for nothing that the early Christians were charged with being the enemies of the human race ("*Odium humani generis*"). See Tacitus' *Annals* and Hausrath's *The Church Fathers.* No wonder from such inspiration and impulse we had, in latter days, the bloody crusades and inquisitions, Alba slaughters and Bartholomew massacres. Why blame them ? Is not the very source tainted ? In the gospels the God of the new Kingdom of Heaven is found to avenge his elect. The disciples were taught to curse if they were not well received.* The Gospel-makers could not rise above their own level even when depicting their god. See Robertson's *A Short History of Christianity.* "We ask in no sarcastic spirit, where is the higher morality of the Gospels and where can one trace its effect ?" Friedlander raises the question and only states the unvarnished truth when he remarks : "The history of the Church is the only source at our disposal, to which we look for an answer to our question. Failure is written across its pages. Bloodshed, wars, persecution, crusades, and hatred stare us in the face in every land, at one time or another in the course of the last nineteen hundred years" (*Jewish Sources*, p. 37). No one need now complain that we have not got sufficient knowledge of the tree ! The tree has borne the fruit it was bound to produce. And the world knows that the fruit tastes bitter. "Christianism as a religion has collapsed." This is the deliberate opinion of a Bishop who has staked his bishopric on it, no armchair critic he. Referring to the last world-war, a conflict at arms among the most outstanding of Christian nations which was ostensibly fought to end the war but by its peace conferences succeeded only fanning the hot coals of war into blazing, the Rt. Rev. William Montgomery Brown, D. D , Bishop of Arkanses, characterises Christianity by saying : "It promised to secure to the world peace and good will, but it has never had more of strife and hate" (*Communism and Christianism,* p. 17). We reserve our comment. But what is the use of flogging a dead horse ?

Christianity makes for Hatred.

How does this Christian fruit produced by two thousand years' labour in the European soil benefit the rest of the world ? Prof.

* On the other hand, if a Hindu *Sannyasin* comes to a house, but the householder is not compliant, the former would say, *ánandse raho*, (be blessed), and depart. This is his way.

Max-Muller has given its method of procedure: "It is always and everywhere the same story. First commercial adventurers, then consuls, then missionaries, then soldiers, then war". (*Last Essays*, 2nd Series, p. 320). Excellent fruit this! Herbert Spencer's certificate follows: "The policy is simple and uniform—bibles first, bomb-shells after. Such being the doings abroad, what are the feelings at home? Honours, titles, emoluments, are showered on the aggressors" (*Sociology*, vol. iii, p. 584). This is the tale one hears in this very year of grace. And this I quote to show how we Indians have tasted the fruit. Appreciation, like charity, must begin at home. At last comes Mr. Hopkins with his testimony—how the first batch of the ambassadors of Christ, the Portuguese, discended upon the Hindus, cross and sword in hand, and how often perpetrating unheard of cruelty and tyranny were supplanted by a new band of Christians, the Dutch. But there was nothing to choose between the two—this side or that side, both the sides the same as the Bengali adage goes. Then came the English who as "the chief standard-bearers of the Christian church, committed under Vansittart more offences against decency, honor, honesty, and humanity than is pleasant for believer and unbeliever to record; and when their own theft had brought revolt, knew no better way to impress the Hindu with the power of Christianity than to revive the Mogul horror.* Such was Christian example. The hand stole and killed; the mouth said, 'I love you'" (*Religions of India*, p. 566). These stories prick the bubble of the false reputation Christianity managed to acquire as to its practical moral superiority over all other religions. So, it is not always that water does not rise above its level! (*Supra* p. 42).

Note on "Immemorial Savagery" *Supra* p. 76 l. 12

It is a hideous tale how a long course of human sacrifice from pre-historic times has got its final lodgment in the Christian sacrament of Eucharist. The cult grew from different directions. At first the victims were eaten, not necessarily sacrificed. But I will not enter into the blood-curdling details of this savage state of humanity. Human sacrifices which would be eaten arose from different motives among which thank-offering, sin-offering and vegetation-charms, or life-charms were most prominent. When the priestly services were requisitioned, sacrifices became ritual and were eaten as sacraments. This is also the case with human sacrifices in which the victim stood

for the God, or, by virtue of the *mantras*, was taken as transformed into the God receiving at the hands of the votaries the divine honour i.e., "the human God who is sacrificed, himself to himself, as a piacular offering" (Grant Allen, *The Idea of God*, p. 405). And when a substitute for the King, the victim, at times a mock-king, exercised the kingly prerogatives. * However, when human sacrifice was abolished, it was symbolised in a *Mystery Drama* in which the victim was mourned as an unjustly slain God, *e.g.*, in the Passion-play of Dionysos as performed in the Eleusinian Mysteries. Of course, the climax reached in Chritianity is a composition of many myths. One peculiar feature of the Eucharist or sacramental meal is the God's partaking in the meal establishing a sacramental communion with the worshippers. Now, human sacrifice being prohibited the priestly-administered Eucharist could be performed only symbolically either through *bread and wine* (body and blood) or through the symbolical animal, a dough image thereof, or a baked image of the God-Man or Child. It is to be noted that the Cake-worship was in vogue among the ancient Buddhists, the relics of which we still find in the *Uddhára-Chandi Puja* (lit. worship offered to the goddess Chandi for obtaning salvation) of East Bengal. The early Christians ate a baked image of a child at the Easter communion. Ostensibly Christianity was founded on cannibalism ("immemorial savagery ?") though by proxy. They are surely wrong who put spiritual interpretation on the original cult of "eat—this is my body" in any sense other than that of a symbol for a long forgotten actual cannabalism—the meaning of which, made odious by the advance of civilization, is lost to us but was not so lost to them—the originators of Christism, the Rishis of Christianity. "The cannibal form of the rite must, however, have been very widespread, as we gather from the fact that a Christian sect, the Paulicians, were accused of it as late as the eighth century" (Ibid p. 343). The charge of child-eating was constantly brought at the door of the early Christians by Pagans. Being forbidden to reveal the sacred mystery even to *catechumens*, not to speak of *infidels* (C. M. p. 208), the Fathers could not

Euchaeist an Evolution of actual Man-sacrifice.

* In the Indian *As'vamedha* sacrifice the horse being a substitute for the King, had the absolute licence for a whole year to roam over the country without check or hindrance, being protected by guards and, before being sacrificed, had the ritual cohabitation wiih the queen. Is it not for some such reason the Church tradition took Christ's ministration to last for one year only ?

give it a lie direct but tried all sorts of prevarication. Is it the reason why we find so few allusions by the Fathers to the liturgy or eucharistic service? However, after tracing the Eucharist to its original source in a most scientific manner, Mr. Robertson concludes: "Thus is an appallingly long drawn evolution summed up for the modern world in a symbol which to the uninstructed eye tells nothing of the dreadful truth, and presents a false fable in its place... Twenty literatures vociferously proclaim the myth, and rivers of tears have been shed at the recital of it, while the monstrous and inexpugnable truth draws at most a shudder from the student, when his conceptual knowledge becomes for him at moments a lightning-flash of concrete vision through the awful vista of the human past" (P. C. p. 212).

ADDENDUM.

Addendum :—*Anent* Morality—Pagan and Christian. Christianity came to regenerate the world, but it interested itself with body and bodily affairs—even its resurrection is bodily. Its prayer is: "Give us to-day our to-morrow's bread." But almost a millenium before it we find in Greece infinitely superior sentiments beautifully given expression to to the effect: *That man's good consists in a certain inner condition of soul.* Homer was asked: "What of all things is the best to pray the gods for"? He answers, "One should pray that one may be law-abiding in one's soul for ever" (*Hesiod*, 800 B. C). This precept is truly said to contain the germ of the spiritual ethic developed by Socrates, Plato and the Stoics. The following sentiment is attributed to Bias of Priene: "Despise all those things that you will not need when you are released from the body, but those things that you will need then, discipline yourself to attain and invoke the gods to help you" (Farnell, *The Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*, p. 142). From Cleanthes's Prayer (circa 300-220 B.C.): "Do thou, Zeus, giver of every good thing, wrapt in cloud and bright lightnings, save mankind from woful ignorance; do thou, Father, dispel it from soul" (William L. Davidson, *The Stoic Creed*, p. 236). We fittingly conclude with the Prayer of Socrates:

"O beloved Pan and the other Gods who dwell here, grant to me that I be beautiful within, and that all I have of external things be in harmony with that which is inward. May I deem only the wise to be rich, and may my possessions be such as no other than the right-minded would bear or hold" (Hilda D. Oakeley, *Greek Ethical Thought*, p. 67).

Jesus also is said to have preached a prayer.

Corrigendum : In p. 55 f. n., 2nd line from bottom : *Read* "bag and baggage" *for* bags and baggages.

d. Moral or Sacramental ?

Dean Farrar unnecessarily and most unjustifiably waxing eloquent over the Sermon on the Mount opines that Jesus taught not like the Scribes*, and the teaching of the Scribes as the Dean has understood it "was narrow, dogmatic, material," and mostly concerned about "the washing of cups and platters, and the particular quarter of a second when new moons and Sabbath-days began" (*The life of Christ* vol. I, p. 265-266). When some Philosophers in the eighteenth century living in a well-organised society and enjoying the fruits thereof erroneously concluded that human society was the result of a contract among men, they clean forgot that without *society* already existing there, men could not so develop as to reach the stage where only a contract was possible. Our Christian theologian has committed a similar blunder. Dean Farrar forgot that he was writing in the fag end of the nineteenth century when all the harvest of the Renaissance had already been garnered, it may be, in the false name of Christianity. But it should not, on that account, be credited to that agency. Says the historian : "It is not Christianity that has civilised Europe, but Europe—the complex of political and culture forces—that has civilised Christianity" (S. H. C. p. 208). What does civilization consist in ? It is a by-word that Greece's legacy is still bearing interest a hundredfold in all manner of wisdom and refinement of Europe's politics, literature, philosophy, architecture, sculpture. But the superstition has prevailed since the days of Ernest Renan that she owes her religion to the Semetic race ; evidently for no deeper reason than that its nominal founder is said to have been a Jew. Is this true ? In answer to this question J. P. Mahaffy has truly said : "Christianity, as we have it historically, would have been impossible without Hellenism" (*Problems in Greek History*, p. 201. See especially *infra* Chaps. vii, viii, ix, xi).

* Just listen to a Jewish authority as opposed to this uninformed special pleading. Observes Dr. Joseph Klausner of Heidelberg: "With Geiger and Graetz, we can aver, without laying ourselves open to the charge of subjectivity and without any desire to argue in defence of Judaism, that *throughout the Gospels there is not one item of ethical teaching which can not be paralleled either in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, or in the Talmudic and Midrashic literature of the period near to the time of Jesus*" (*Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 384).

Greek Culture with Roman Jurisprudence and other accessary forces is triumphant to-day at Christendom and not Jesus. Look at history! A millenium and a half after the thorough Christianisation of Europe the Church was equally, and is still occupied with trifles as the "washing of cups", so to speak. What good was done to men and what change of heart was effected by the pre-Reformation Christianity? None, because its primary concern was sacramental and not moral. What was required of the new converts was not conformity to any teaching of Jesus and imitation of his life and example which is a later development almost modern but belief in the *resurrection* and atonement.* The simplest form of Christian faith of which we have got any record is a confession that Jesus was the Christ of whose life and death a rumour only was passing from mouth to mouth. "There is no vestige of evidence for any early or earliest Christianity", says Mr. Whittaker "that was simply a moral rule of life" (O. C. p. 31). The cause of the peculiar form of Christianity the Dean advocates to-day is termed atheism by the parent Church which is still dominant and "will accept no reconciliation with modern civilization" (Draper's *Conflict*, p. vi). It is here in this Church, if at all, Jesus reigns. If Europe is civilised to-day, it is Europe *minus* Christianity properly so called.

Christianity no moral Influence.

Is not even to-day in the highly civilised Christian America a man being persecuted because of his avowing the theory of evolution—the most marvellous discovery of the Nineteenth century—a century that has added more to the stock of human knowledge than all the centuries put together, as Henry Drummond has put it in his *Ascent of Man*? John T. Scopes, a teacher in a Tennessee school, has been prosecuted (July, 1925) for telling his pupils that evolution is true. What an audacity that being a Christian he does not hold fast to the grandmother's tale of the Biblical story of creation! The teacher has consequently been condemned. That he has not been burnt at the stake like Bruno or im-

* We make no apology to quote the following orthodox view on the point. "The Moderation [i.e. imitation of Christ] which in the last century nearly extinguished the religion of the country," palpitates the Rev. James Stalker, M.A. (1889) "made much of the example of Christ. But it divorced it from His atonement, and urged men to follow Christ's example, without first making them acquainted with Him as the Saviour from sins that are past. The Evangelicals, in opposition to this, made Christ's atonement the burden of their testimony and, when His example was mentioned, were ever ready with, Yes, but His death is more important" (*Imago Christi*. p. 32). Vilification of Rammohan came from men of this type!

prisoned like Galileo is due to the advancement of culture and not to the influence of Christanity. An Amsterdam telegram (March, 1926) flashes the news across the seas that Pastor Geelkerken is being ousted from his pastorate on the question : "Did the conversation between Eve and Serpent really happen?" This is Christianity, pure and simple, apart from its garbage of civilisation that is accumulating all around in spite of it. Christianity seems triumphant because it is being maintained by means of many vested interests as constituted by vast revenues and supported by more or less skilful professional sophists who are interested in defending it. Can the author of the *Life of Christ* inform us why the effect of the "mighty Sermon" to which alone according to him, it was "granted to regenerate mankind' was withheld till the return of Greek Culture exiled from Europe by Christian fanaticism to be harboured at the Islamic seats of culture as already pointed out? They say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Mr. McCabe puts the question: You say the God came upon the earth and lived in our midst for thirty years. Did that quicken in any way the sluggish stream of human progress? For the reply one must not draw upon one's sentiment or imagination coloured by traditional shibboleths, but it must come from history: and the reply is:

"We know that the fifteen hundred years which followed the acceptance of Christ's teaching were certainly no nearer the golden age than the fifteen hundred years which had preceded. The thunder of war has gathered volume from century to century, acreage of squalid poverty has not been lessened, if it has not been enlarged; vice and crime have flourished as luxuriantly as they had done in the valley of the Nile or on the banks of Euphrates; and in the very name of Christ, the grossest superstitions have been imposed on a blind and impotent people by their priests; and millions of pagans, Jews, heretics and schismatics have been slaughtered in the interest of his Church." (*The Sources*, p. 2). This is history. So, I think, no importance should be attached to the following ill-conceived query of Giovanni Papini, as it is based, not on the correct appreciation of the objective history, but on the exuberance of one's subjective feeling born of ignorance: "How they explain the miracle of a syncretism that around the memory of an obscure plagiarist has created an immense movement of men of thought, and of institutions, so strong and revolutionary as to have changed the face of the world for several centuries" (*The Story of Christ*, pp. xi-xii). The correct reading of history is that the movement has created the

"plagiarist" and not the plagiarist "an immense movement". And the revolution is due to the accretion of ages and not to the syncretism effected by "an obscure plagiarist". These superstitions must die. But the uninformed orthodoxy deluded by tradition treads on its wonted path. It is a far cry from the Dean to the Archbishop; yet they sail on the same boat, as is apparent from the following proclamation: "The Gospel of Christ was a new and quickening power cast into the midst of an old and dying world" (Trench, *Notes on the Parables*, p. 119). No, the truth lies quite in the other way about. Christianity was never a moral force even at its inception. "To explain the process as the morally deserved success of a religion superior from the start in virtue of the superiority of its nominal Founder, would be to adhere to pre-scientific conception of causation, akin to the geocentric assumption of astronomy." It has been fully established and historically confirmed by the author of the *Jesus Problem* (pp. 155-156) that "the Christian success was finally achieved by the assimilation of all manner of pagan modes of attraction on the side of creed * and the absolute ultimate subordination of the specialities of the early Christian ethic to the business of political adaptation." Mr. McCabe is exactly of the same opinion: "Here

Christian Success political.

* Generalises Professor Sten Konow in the *Visva-Bhárati Quarterly* (1924): "When a people abandons its own beliefs, and adopts a new religion, that never takes place in the same way as when a man gets a new dress...... ; in reality, however, the change is to be a great extent only one of names, of vocabulary. The new gods are worshipped much in the same spirit as the old ones, the new ceremonies are based on the conceptions which were the leading ones in the old ritual." The view expressed here is literally illustrated by the history of the expansion of Christianity which spread by paganising itself. Sincere Christians assented to this paganisation of Christianity (the term *Christianisation of paganism* will serve the purpose equally well) believing that ultimately truth would triumph and the impurity would be removed. Vain hope! Once in the history of the Bráhma Sámaj similar hopes were entertained and an alliance was made with a non-Bráhma princely house. But the dream has vanished! We cull the following nauseating details—a few selections only, from J. W. Draper's *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (p. 46—48). "Two causes led to the amalgamation of Christianity with paganism: 1. The political necessities of the new dynasty; 2. The policy adopted by the new religion to insure its spread."

"To the Emperor [Constantine]—a mere worldling—a man without any religious convictions, doubtless it appeared best for himself, best for the empire, and best for the contending parties, Christian and Pagan, to promote their amalgamation as much as possible."

I can only state that that triumph was political, not spiritual; that by religious weapons it had, during three centuries, made no more progress than the rival religions, and its final substitution for them was due to coercive legislation and drastic persecution"

Christianity a transformed Paganism.

"In accomplishing this amalgamation, Helena, the empress-mother, aided by the court ladies, led the way. For her gratification there were discovered, in a cavern of Jerusalem, wherein they had lain buried for more than three centuries, the Saviour's Cross, and those of the two thieves, the inscriptions and the nails that had been used. They were identified by a miracle. A true relic-worship set in. The superstition of the old Greek times reappeared." We refrain from entering into any details.

"Olympus was restored, but the divinities passed under other names. The more powerful provinces insisted on the adoption of their time-honoured conceptions. Views of the Trinity, in accordance with Egyptian traditions were established. Not only was the adoration of Isis under a new name restored but even her image, standing on the crescent moon, reappeared. The wellknown effigy of that goddess with the infant Horus in her arms has descended to our days in the beautiful, artistic creations of the Madonna and Child. Such restorations of old conceptions under novel forms were everywhere received with delight. When it was announced to the Ephesians that the Council of that place, headed by Cyril, had decreed that the Virgin should be called "the mother of God", with tears of joy they embraced the knees of their bishop; it was the old instinct peeping out; their ancestors would have done the same for Diana." So the Egyptian Trinity of Father, Mother and Son was verbally reinstated in the place of the rival. And no reinstatement either!

The Mother of God.

Is not the Holy Ghost called the Mother of Christ? And this is what it should be. Rájá Rammohan Roy quoting from the historian Mosheim has shown in his *Appeals* that the Trinity survived because of the polytheistic tendency of the preponderating element of the heathen converts.

"Heathen rites were adopted, a pompous and splendid ritual, gorgeous robes, mitres, tiaras, wax-tapers, processional services, lustrations, gold and silver vases, were introduced. The Roman lituus, the chief ensign of the augurs, became the crozier. Churches were built over the tombs of martyrs, and consecrated with rites borrowed from the ancient laws of the Roman pontiffs. Festivals and commemorations of martyrs multiplied with numberless fictitious discoveries of their remains."

"Images and relics were introduced into the Churches, and worshipped after the fashion of the heathen gods. The happy souls of departed Christians were invoked." So on and so forth. But no where in all these we find a Christianity based on the Sermon or soaked in moral superiority that was from the start "granted to regenerate mankind."

Thus the paganisation proceeded apace with a feeble voice here, a mild protest there, raised against the process which only proves the truth of the contention. A Faustus would complain to Augustine: "Nothing distinguishes you from the

(*The Sources*, p. 144). Says Mr. Montefiore: "When Christianity became the State Church of the Roman Empire, it was forbidden under severe penalties for anybody to become a proselyte to Judaism"

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pagans except that you hold your assemblies apart from them". Or, a Bishop Newton would disclaim: "Is not the worship of saints and angels now in all respects the same that the worship of demons was in former times? Nay the very same temples, the very same images which were once consecrated to Jupiter and other demons, are now consecrated to the Virgin Mary and other saints. The very same rites and inscriptions are ascribed to both, the very same prodigies and miracles are related of these as of those." To effect this an inspired prophet as our Unitarian friends interpret Jesus, was not required; much less an incarnation of God. A few frauds and cheats sufficed.

Another world-renowned historian, Henry Thomas Buckle, bears the same witness: "What followed [after the propagation of Christianity in Europe] is well known to the students of Ecelesiastical history. The superstition of Europe, instead of being diminished, was only turned into a fresh channel. The adoration of idols was succeeded by the adoration of saints; the worship of the Virgin was substituted for the worship of Cybele; (this is curiously illustrated by the fact, that the 25th of March, which is now called the Lady-day, in honour of the Virgin Mary, was, in Pagan times, called Hilaria, and was dedicated to Cybele, the mother of the gods); Pagan ceremonies were established in Christian churches; not only the mummeries of idolatry, but likewise the doctrines, were quickly added, and were incorporated and worked into the spirit of the new religion". (Work quoted, vol. i, pp. 210-211) Unfortunately the evidences of history can not be explained away by cavillers. No cavil avails in this field.

It will not be out of place to bring out what psychic needs urged the creation of a Mother-Goddess. The adoption of the cult of the Mother-Goddess served two-fold purpose. Christianity had to combat against the well-organised worships of Isis and Cybele. A substitute for this form of devotion was an absolute desideratum to attract the masses. The worship of the Mother opened for multitudes doors of devotional exercises in both its scenic and spiritual aspects which could hardly be expected from the worship of a sacrificed demi-God. Moreover, the psycho-analysts would point out that those spiritual hankerings of the soul which are satisfied among the female section by a God, could be satisfied, among the male section of the devotees, by a female Deity only. So, was there anything unnatural that the multitudes prostrated themselves before the Bishop who gave them the Mother-Goddess? Had not Jesus been already given a mother, one would have been invented for the purpose. And the process began at an earliar date by forcing the Holy Ghost to sing to the tune. Origen tells us that in the lost *Gospel of the Hebrews* Jesus was made to speak of "My Mother the Holy Spirit."

Genesis of Mother-Goddess.

I can not here resist the temptation of adding a few sentences from Robertson's *Short History of Christianity* in order to show what new methods Christianity invented to propagate the creed and in this respect the originality of Christianity must be acknowledged with all humility—

Christianity propagated by Sword

(*Judaism and St. Paul*, p. 55). Yes, the triumph of Christendom over the rest of the world is due to its political and economical organisation; the East reads it on the pages of History written in her life-blood. Why could the Pagan Rome drive out a Hannibal from its very gate but Christian Rome fell an easy victim to the barbarians? Did she not recoup under Julian the Apostate? That is the difference of organisation, and not the superiority of one religion over another. Mustapha Kemal Pasha learnt the secret and the success was his. Long before the Christian era the Stoics preached universal love of humanity as an active principle of life. Schneider says: "Jesus by no means discovered altruism in ethics. Hellenistic moralists urged altruism long before the birth of Jesus. If the ethic of Jesus seems *particularly*

No moral superiority.

The normal mode of conversion was an appeal to the chiefs or kings. When they were convinced that Christianity was to their interest, then wholesale baptism followed. And Augustine baptised ten thousand Angli in a day. Does this not indicate that these missionaries were dealing more with animals in a pen than with human beings?

Heraclius caused multitudes of Jews to be dragged to baptism by force.

Charlemagne decreed that those who rejected the gospel shou'd be put to death. The survivors were finally bribed into belief. No religion was ever more unspiritually propagated. Centuries after centuries the propagation of Christianity proceeded on the same lines, making it as truly a religion of the sword as Islam is said to be.

Of the crusaders it is said: No armies were ever more licentious than those of the cross; and those of Attila were hardly more ferocious. At the Siege of Marra they fed on the corpses they dug up, and after storming the place they massacred the inhabitants, though large sums were paid by the latter for their lives. Why not, as no faith need be keept with a misbeliever! And after the capture of Jerusalem, in the name of Jesus were slain a great multitude of every age not exempting mothers with infants in their arms. Thus was retrieved the mythic Saviour's sepulchre. And at length the Order of the Knights Templars, (*Supra* p. 70), the remnants of the crusaders, was crushed in its home by as base a conspiracy and as cruel a slaughter as ever marked the struggle of Christians with Mahommedans. The lesson learnt abroad was fully put into practice at home. Why should we not wax eloquent over the Sermon on the Mount?

One must stop from sheer nauseousness of its reiteration and exclaim with the heathen King of the Zulus crushed by ostentatiously Christian statesmanship: "The blood shed in my reign was, to the blood shed since, as an ant in a pool of water" (pp. 168—222).

This is the quality and quantity of the moral (?) gain of the world out of its Christianisation when both the means of propagation and the end achieved are taken into consideration!

altruistic, that is due, apart from the theological suggestion, to the fact that the altruistic maxims of Jesus may seem less restricted and more impressive than in the case of the Greeks, because the scientific capacity, and therefore the scientific control of a new ethic, were slighter in the case of the Jews and Jesus than among the Greeks and their leading thinkers". (*Witnessess*, p. 270). And it can be easily ascertained why it is more impressive, if ever. Christ's exhortations are, more often than not, *sakâma* at the best as it would appear from his appeal to the rich youngman to follow him : "Thou shalt have treasure in Heaven" and "shall receive an hundredfold" (*Matt.* 19[21-29]). The Sermon also exhorts : "great is your reward in heaven". It will no longer do to revile Islam with the taunt that its followers only are enamoured of *houris* in the paradise. If we do not find any indelicate passages in the New Testament, it should be remembered, the book had passed through many emendations before it reached its present form. But the apocryphal conception of Christian heaven with its perpetual banquet elaborately drawn from paganism is as gross as that of popular Islam. *

Christian Heaven material.

* "The heaven of the popular, the fashionable Christianity was the old Olympus, from which the venerable Greek divinities had been removed. There on a great white throne, sat God the Father, on his right the Son, and then the blessed Virgin, clad in a golden robe, and "covered with various female adornments" ; on the left sat God the Holy Ghost. Surrounding their thrones were host of angels with their harps. The vast expanse beyond was filled with tables, seated at which the happy spirits of the just enjoyed a perpetual banquet" (Draper's *Conflict*, p. 70). Moral grandeur indeed ! And is this latter-day development unjustified, or does it stream forth from the original source ? The very source seems to be tainted. Jesus is made to say : "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (*Luke*, 22[29-30]) So Gustaf Dalman can not be found fault with when he says : "From the Gospels [*Matt.* 8[11] ; *Luke* 13[29] ; 22[30]] it may be inferred that the conception of an actual repast for the pious was already an old established idea. Even for Jesus this repast was no mere figure of speech" (*The Words of Jesus*, p. 111). Commenting on this Pfleiderer justifies Dalman and remarks: "Jesus seems to have thought of the condition of the partakers in the Reign of God, not as a supersensuous existence comparable to that of heavenly spiritual beings, but as an earthly existence raised to a higher power and freed from the evils of the present life. That was certainly the way in which the primitive community of His followers understood it." And they could not have misunderstood him, continues the commentator, "if Jesus had thought and taught the direct opposite—if he had represented the unending life under the Reign of God as completely freed from earthly conditions and as the blessedness of heavenly spirit" (*The Primitive Christianity*, vol. ii, pp. 417-18). And what is this

It can not be pointed out with too much emphasis that if the superiority of the Christian ethics is so much trumpeted, it is not only because of the thoughtlessness of the masses to whom the appeal is made, but also of the stark blindness almost amounting to the moral guilt of those who are expected to know better about the Greek and Hindu (including the Buddhist) Philosophy and Religion. "How long are we to listen to the childish claim", exclaims the author of the *Historical Jesus* (p. 29), "that moral maxims which in India were delivered milleniums ago by forgotten men were framable in Seneca's day only in Syria, and there only by one "unique and effulgent" personality, whose mere teaching lifted humanity to new heights ?....And any considerate scrutiny of the *logia* of the Gospels will inevitably force the open-minded student to recognise the multiplicity of thought and ideal" in them. Buckle is more outspoken : "That the system of morals propounded in the New Testament, contained no maxim which had not been previously enunciated, and that some of the most beautiful passages in the Apostolic writings are quotations from Pagan authors, is well-known to every scholar" So, "to assert that Christianity communicated to man moral truths previously unknown argues, on the part of the asserter, either gross ignorance or else wilful fraud" (Work cited, vol. i, p. 137.) If still there lingers a doubt in any sceptic's mind, Lecky comes to his rescue. That the New Testament brought in a new sense of morality into the world does not bear the light of scrutiny. After disposing of very easily the ridiculous proposition that the Stoic Rome was overcome by a superior ethic, the historian shows that Christianity spread, not conquering by virtue of its specific moral force, but, on the contrary, by absorbing and assimilating the pagan cults and creeds i. e.. "paganising Christianity" as Draper

Propagation not by moral Force.

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unending life under the Reign of God? Certainly the Christian doctrines will have to be rewritten to-day as historical criticism is daily mystifying them. Professor J. S. Mackenzie in the *Hibbert Journal* (1924, October) indicates that the word "eternal" has no reference to time. Professor James Ward most unambiguously puts it in the next issue of the same quarterly : "We miss the meaning of 'eternal' in the New Testament, if we associate it with time at all, and especially if we interpret it as referring simply to a future life everlasting" (Jan. 1925). The explanation is that Christianity had its origin in some pre-Christian creed. This view is justified by Dalman's reference to the *actual repast* as an old established idea even in the gospels. The Christian movement only misunderstood and misinterpreted it. The comparative study points out the source. "Eternal life" in the sense Prof. Ward explains is met with in the Dionysian mystic system, half a millenium older than the Jesuine movement.

has put it ; or by the sheer dint of its organising power as another historian, Mr. Robertson, has proved. We know, this is exactly how neo-Hinduism triumphed over Buddhism. "In any case", says Prof. Schmiedel of Zurich, "this presentation of Christ, which corresponded to Heathen modes of conceiving the gods, and the sons of the gods, has greatly contributed to the diffusion of Christianity" (*Jesus or Christ*). Justification of this view comes from a very unexpected quarter. After discanting on the joy, peace and glory to be attained at the advent of the new order announced "even at the doors", Father Tyrrel emphatically affirms : "There is no hint in all this of a Kingdom of Christ, a reign of morality here upon earth to be brought about by the gradual spread of Christ's teaching and example" (*Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, p. 50). At least nobody sees where and when the moral force worked. The early Fathers, the Rishis of the movement, strenuously defended what is now euphemistically called *pious frauds** connived at, in justification of their creed and for the propagation of their faith, thereby tainting the whole ecclesiastical literature with the most shameless type of mendacity. "Generation after generation it became more universal, it continued," laments the historian, "till the very sense of truth and the very love of truth seemed blotted out from the minds of men". It was the secular philosophers of the 17th

Accomplished by Fraud.

* "The Greek Fathers", says Dr. Newman in *Apologia* (as quoted by Lecky in *Rationalism*, v. i, p. 397, f : n.), "thought that, when there was a *justa causa*, an untruth need not be a lie". And the *just cause* is "self-defence, charity, *zeal for God's honour* and the like". The historian explains : "It is plain enough that this last would include all of what are commonly termed pious frauds". Gibbon repeatedly brings in conclusive proofs of audacious and unscrupulous mendacity that characterises the ecclesiastical historians and then in disgust gives up the hope of deriving any benefit from them. He protests against the "precarious assistance of the ecclesiastical writers, who, in the heat of religious faith, are apt to despise the *profane virtues of sincerity and moderation*" (vol. iii, p. 197). The italics are ours. "It is almost impossible for modern readers to realise how habitually and unscrupulously theologians forged and interpolated in every direction," remarks Mr. Frank Hill Perrycoste, the author of "*Ritual, Faith and Morals*, in his *Influence of Religion upon Truthfulness* (p. 259), "in order to promote Church-interests". The author does not stand only on his own legs. He has strengthened his position by the authority of scores of other historians. He leads his reader from century to century, gathering facts and figures as he proceeds, until the conviction becomes irresistible that the Christian religion has sanctioned falsification of history, sanctified "pious frauds," reduced the calumny of opponents to a fine art, and anathematised free and honest inquiry.

century who rescued the sense of truth for Europe (Lecky's *Rationalism in Europe*, vol. I, ch. iv, p. 397). Throughout the ages, beginning with the gospels themselves, in order to give the origin of Christianity the ghost of a chance of historicity, an immense quantity of interpolations and forged documents credited to the account of the pillars of the faith "remain to be the most disgraceful features of the Church history of the first few centuries," the same authority tells us, and certainly they were nearer the "figure on the Cross!" It was only yesterday that people irrespective of their moral character bought passports from the occupier of St. Peter's *gadi* at Rome to ensure their passage to heaven! Was not Julian,* on account of his opposition to the Christian faith, incessantly slandered, and Constantine, a rake, for his adherence, sainted? No, Christianity as a religion had nothing to do with moral principles as such. And the reason is not very difficult to find. For Christianity, as it is in itself, the formation of character, properly so called, as is urged at present, was never a point, far less a strong point. To tell the truth, Christianity is a mystic sacrament, pure and simple. "The Eucharist is the keystone of the arch built over the death of the God in the gospels," so ovserves Mr. Robertson in *Pagan Christs*, p. 147. From end to end it was what may be called the *Christianisation* of the worship of a sacrificed god through certain ceremonies and sacraments, the motive of which was ultimately reduced to avoiding hell and securing an abode in the so-called paradise. We are in our country also surrounded by no less an elaborate paraphernalia of the worship of gods and goddesses, and here too we find the formation of character no motive. With Christianity it could not be otherwise. Was not Raja Rammohan Roy most fiercely attacked when he drew the attention of the Christian public to this fact? Why? Because everything pertaining to this religion centred round, and developed from, a cult of the sacrificed god with only an adventitious relation with morality in the proper sense of the term. So, with absolute truth, Mr. Robertson observes that the Christian religion "historically took its rise in the "reversion" from theistic faith to a form of sympathetic magic, the Eucharist, and was practically rooted as a

Character no consideration.

* Every student of Church history knows what has been the fate of Julian at the hand of the fanatical Christian writers because of his apostacy. But the historian gives a quite different verdict. Buckle calls Julian, "a prince of eminent probity, whose opinions are often attacked, but against whose moral conduct even calumny itself has hardly breathed a suspicion" (Work cited, vol. i, p. 143)

State cult throughout Europe by the assumption of magical functions on the part of the priest, not only in the administration of the Eucharist itself, but in the claim to exercise "supernatural" powers of exorcism and to weild "supernatural" instruments in the form of holy relics. Such practices certainly represent an intellectual and moral declension from the ethic of all the leading Greek schools and of the nobler rabbins" (P. C., p. 31). Its ethical contents are a matter of foreign accretions. Its boast of salvation by faith virtually reduces itself to the salvation by sacrifice, and is consequently on all fours with the savage religions. The founder of Christianity gave his body to be eaten, and the followers partook of the nature of Christ consequently- in some churches *actually*, in some symbolically, but that is the central rite of the cult. "Not he that believed, still less he that loved his neighbour, but he only that received the mystic rite at consecrated hands, was to be saved," so says the historian (S. H. C., p. 189). 'आराधितो यदि हरिः तपसा ततः किम् । नाराधितो यदि हरिः तपसा ततः किम् ॥ If you join this rite, everything else is superfluous ; if you do not join, nothing avails. "It was to observe this supreme rite that the nascent Christian congregations, after they had worshipped in the Temple or the local synagogue hurried to some appointed private house," maintains Mr. James Collier in *Jesus or Christ*, "where the bread-flesh and the wine-blood were solemnly eaten and drunk." They lived and moved and had their being in the Eucharist. To eat the flesh and drink the blood of the sacrificed victim was the be-all and end-all of their spirituality, if it can, without offence, be so called. The Vulgate translation of the "Lord's Prayer" also points to that conclusion : "Give us to-day our supersubstantial bread." *Consubstantial* or *transubstantial* sounds equally well. In India there are people who look equally eagerly to the *K lipuj* for such *bread*. *Spiritual* it is never. The cynic may call it super-spiritual. Praises, and prayers, confessions and thanksgivings, benedictions and sacred readings there were, and they were bodily borrowed from Judaism and Jewish liturgies ; but they were mere scaffoldings around the rite to add to its solemnity and grandeur. What, on the other hand, did they fight their battles about, or what did their schisms arise from ? Not in the arena of educated opinion as to whether the Sermon on the Mount was *Sak ma* or *Nisk ma* where "a kindly intellectual tournament can do no harm", as Dr. Drummond expects ; nor in the hair-splitting debate whether Jesus roused our aspirations to activity rather than set down the law of action, as Dr. Carpenter contends ; but mostly about how and to what extent bread and wine were transmuted into the flesh and blood of Christ, or about the nature

of the different persons of the Holy Trinity. And opinion ranged from the spiritual communion to the actual transubstantiation. As to how enthusiastically these battles were fought—no "intellectual tournament' in all conscience, Dr. James Drummond informs us that "in the time of the great doctrinal controversies a heathen writer compares the Christians to wild beasts" (*Jesus or Christ*). One Church historian records: "Under the sons of Constantine Christian Bishops in numberless synods cursed one another, turn by turn," denying to each other, as another has said, "the name of Christian and even the hope of salvation" (Calcutta *Statesman*, 1.2.25). Another authority remarks from historical evidence that "though they were irreconcilable in matters of faith, there was one point in which all these sects agreed—ferocious hatred and persecution of each other." (Draper's *Conflict*, p. 79). All truths were determined either by miracle, or by bloodshed, or better still by coaxing the ladies of the Emperor's harem, and promulgated at the point of bayonet. "At the time of which we are speaking, all the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire exhibited an intellectual anarchy. There were fierce quarrels respecting the Trinity, the Essence of God, the position of the Son, the nature of the Holy Spirit, the influences of the Virgin Mary The triumphant clamour first of one, then of another sect—was confirmed, sometimes by miracle-proof, sometimes by bloodshed. No attempt was ever made to submit the rival opinions to logical examination" (Ibid, p. 70). How sadly has the doctrine of forgiveness miscarried? And it can not be otherwise, as in one place in the gospels the duty of forgiveness has been enforced on penalty of hell-fire, thus making God imitate the cruelties of man-made laws. The ethic of hate, the bitter hate of opponents almost personified in the case of the hatred towards the Pharisees, has naturally got the better of it. But the Greek philosophers, two centuries ago, had pointed out the naturalness of error, and therefore inculcated that the duty towards the wrong-doer was not to hate but to correct him. One wishes the example of a Buddha or of a Socrates had come to their rescue, the example of the Son of God having totally failed. And in the actual battlefields to fight the enemy with they felt no *moral* scruples to discover, in the middle ages, the very lance by which the body of Christ was pierced on the cross. Wherein consisted their festivals? In nothing but the dramatic renderings of the supernatural birth, death, resurrection and ascension of the god which are practically devoid of any ethical significance whatsoever. What were their ceremonies? Why, baptism called Christening *i.e.* Christ-making, and its twin brother, the confirmation,

Ritual all in all.

both qualifying a man to receive communion without which, even if an infant died, it was forthwith condemned to perdition. And the emphasis on baptism is easily explained. The civilised Gentile world refused to submit to the particular Hebrew custom. The baptism was then, of necessity, substituted for the barbarous rite of circumcision. However, there is nothing human and natural in all these rites and ceremonies. The devotees throughout dealt with a god. It is the modern theologians who denying divinity to Jesus, his birthright, find themselves stranded in a vacuum which they are duty-bound to somehow fill up by human qualities, explaining or explaining away, as best as they can, the fables by which the early evangelists clothed the story of their god. Not in the early days only. "During many centuries, the subtlest intellects of Europe exhausted their strength on the rites and dogmas of Christianity. The service which the metaphysicians rendered to the Church by their development of the doctrine of transubstantiation is a striking instance of this subordination of the intellect to ecclesiastical dogmas" (Buckle, Work quoted, vol. ii, p. 213).

Dr. Carpenter is absolutely sure that the moderns are giving a direction to the gospel account quite other than what the compilers themselves meant, as the Doctor says in unmistakable terms that "the Evangelists naturally write from their own point of view, and not from ours [no reasonable man can expect that] ; and they tell their story under the preoccupation of the messiahship" (*Jesus or Christ*). Unfortunately what the modern theologian terms "pre-occupation" was the evangelists, only occupation to which they devoted themselves with undivided attention. Every theorist wants his own theory substantiated, and when disappointed, lays the blame at the door of the evangelists. He is quite forgetful of the fact that his 20th century problems could not possibly occur to them. M. Loisy on that account finds the gospel testimony of disconcerting nature. He, too, though a Roman Catholic but inoculated with the modernist virus, deplores "the preoccupation of the narrators to prove that Jesus was the Messiah." (*The Gospel and the Church, p. 99*). The actual situation is here lost sight of. The messiahship of Jesus may prove inconvenient to the theologian under the pressure of modern circumstances, but that was no concern of the evangelists. They were out to create a Messiah of Jesus. So, there is much force in the following remark of Schmiedel who exposes the inner character of the Biblical criticism from the theologians' view-point : "In only too many instances what purports to be a deep study of the character of Jesus simply amounts to imputing to him the author's own ideals." (*Jesus in Modern Criticism, p. 8*)

However, the inveterate tendency of the modern theologian is to show that from the example of the *good-man* [in the place of the evangelists' *god-man.*] Jesus, a great moral force was ushered in into the world—a world they falsely conceive to have been destitute of any moral virtues. The standpoint is utterly false both historically and theologically.

Finale of the Drama.

If Christendom be great, it is great not because, but in spite of, the Christian religion. This truth can not be repeated too often. Because this is the verdict of all historians of comparative cultures and religions, such a Gibbon, Buckle, Lecky, Draper and a host of others who have not only judged unbiassedly but given out their mind unreservedly against the popular superstition. The theologians have apparently reached the end of the tether as they are unable to arrest the inevitable fate fast overtaking their version of the gospel narrative. It is evident from the fourteenth meeting of the National Conference that met at Manchester, followed by a discussion on Christianity as reported in the Inquirer-Supplement, April 28, 1923. The net result of it, in this particular aspect, is: The Christ is a beautiful example of fantasy-thinking. "Christ" began as an idea and soon became a whole lot of ideas. This multiple idea apparently inconsistent, underwent an elaborate process of development ending in what may truly be called a character of fiction. This Christ-idea was imposed on Jesus of Nazareth assumed to be a historical person, of whose actual life and teachings we know next to nothing. If this be the sense of historicity (in which sense Hamlet is a historical person) on which Christianity is taken to have been founded, then no one will object to accept the gospel narrative as historical, though analysis takes away this much too. Better late than never. To come to truth directly is good ; to come to it haltingly is good also, it may not be so good, as Spencer would say. However, this is in England. But how goes the day with the neighbouring States across the Atlantic. Why ? "The United States is witnessing", says the *Literary Guide*, June 1924, "a novel spectacle—the trial of a Bishop of the Episcopal Church by a Court of Bishops for heresy and false teaching." Bishop Brown has resigned his bishopric but tenaciously holds to his right as a churchman. He points out with considerable force that all Bishops are Darwinians believing in Evolution which runs counter to the teachings of the Bible, the Prayer Book and the Creed. Are they not equally heretical ? The Bishop contends that such a trial is an anachronism to-day. How many of them in their private thoughts accept the literal interpretations of the dogmas, e. g. the fall, the redemption or the resurrection ? "Jesus remained in the Jewish Church, in spite of his

many and great heresies, until he was put out by death. My contention is," urges the Bishop, "that in view of this example, whether it be, as you think, of an historical or, as I think, of a dramatic character, there is no reason why I should voluntarily go out of the Christian church." *Communism and Christianism, pp. 25—26.* See *supra* pp. 82-83

Addenda.

1. *Anent* the impudent assumption as to the Christian origin of the Indian Way of Faith, *supra* p. 27. Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal too has raised his powerful voice against any such assumption, already opposed by the late Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar and Mr. K. T. Telang, originally mooted by Dr. Weber and readily accepted by most Christian scholars. He remarks: "The doctrine of Salvation through Devotion (भक्ति) had an indigenous Indian origin. The Vedic Hymns are replete with sentiments of piety and reverence (भक्ति and श्रद्धा) in the worship of the gods." So the Doctor sees no reason in any pretext for the assertion of the Christian origin of the Indian भक्ति मार्ग (Way of Faith), or of the Vaishnava creed of Salvation in Krishna" (*Vaishnavism and Christianity*, pp. 4-5). He also holds that *S'vet's'vatara* bears the same relation to the other ten Upanishads as the Johannine to the Synoptic gospels.

2. *Anent* India's salvation by accepting Jesus. See *supra* pp. 3 ; 25 ; 54 etc. The Rishi prays :—असतो मा सद्गमय ।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय । Brihad. Upa. I. 3. 27.

That is, "Lead me from the unreal to the real,
Lead me from darkness to light,
Lead me from death to immortality."

Chaitanyadeva's prayer: न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं कवितां वा जगदीश कामये मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वरे भवताद्भक्तिरहैतुकी त्वयि ।

That is, "O Lord of the universe, I do not pray for wealth or men or beautiful wife or poetic inspiration May there be an uncaused (spontaneous) Bhakti in thee, O Lord, in my life after life." The spiritual sentiment embodied in this prayer is, in its loftiness, unapproachable by any prayer known to us. It can not even be given an adequate expression to in the English language. Jesus also taught a prayer—the New Testament says, and it contains: "Give us to-day our to-morrow's bread", which must needs, however unwittingly, breed a worldliness of the coarsest type. India has now learnt enough, at least after the spectacle of the entire Christian world at war, to challenge all Western ideals as the mere dogmas of materialism.

CHAPTER IV.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

a Form.

The Sermon on the Mount is said to be the bed-rock of Christian ethics. So it requires a special treatment both on its formal as well as material aspects. Apart from its matter which will presently and prominently engage our attention, the form and the chronological order also deserve some preliminary consideration. At the very outset the tragedy (comedy!) overtakes us that from the same person at the same time we get a vehement harangue on the mountain (*Matthew*) as well as at the plain (*Luke*). The second gospel, to some the most authoritative because "what we know of the life of historic Jesus is contained in *Mark*" (Montefiore, *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 117), is ominously silent. Historicity, of course, such history as we know of Jesus, does not need the name either of the mountain * or of the plain! If it were historical in the human sense, the omission would be inexplicable. But, for a myth contradictions are a support, not a hindrance. In the Sermon the abrupt introduction of the topic of *persecution* is a little too premature. As a matter of fact the question should not have come in at that early stage.

Full of anachronism and contradictions.

"It is generally recognised," says Dr. Abrahams, "that the persecution of the Christians described in the Synoptics must be referred to a period posterior to the death of Jesus" (*Pharisaism and Gospels*, p. 57). There could be no persecution in Jesus' life-time. It is a clear case of later addition. Now, in addressing a motley crowd the compliment: "Ye are the salt" (originally an Aramaic proverb), or "ye are the light' (originally from the solar myth: Mithraism) is simply ridiculous in view of the fact that the apostles themselves remained without the light or leaven to

* If it were a real mountain the early Christian Community must have discovered its name. It is really a mythical conception. That a teacher led a multitude to a mountain-top to deliver an address that could be finished in ten minutes has a mythical ring about it. Moses also gave his law from the *mount*. Jesus chose his *twelve* on the mountain! But in no case the name is mentioned. The omission is a proof of the mountain being a symbol and not a concrete reality. It is really the representation of the Sun-God of mythology surrounded by the twelve signs of the zodiac. Any picture of the sun on his mount would suggest it. It is also said that originally the Sermon was compiled as addressed to the twelve. This much is indicated by the compliments—"ye are the salt," "ye are the light."

the end of the ministry, as is exposed from the notorious *betrayal* or *denial.* Surely, they are stock phrases or set formulas taken at random to add as embellishments to the address. This scrappy dissertation is not at all suitable to the circumstances under which it is reported to have been delivered. So Rev. Arthur Wright, taking courage in both hands and shaking off the shackles of his office for the time being, asserts that "the Sermon on the mount" is too long and too full of matter to have been delivered at one sitting. The section which contains the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6^{5-15}) is plainly out of place, for it disturbs the order (*The Four Gospels* p. 75). If delivered at all, who remembered it? Not Jesus' followers, in all conscience! Never they, if anybody at all. So dull in intellect and lacking in retentive memory that they had to be reminded with *Jesuine* rebuke (*Mark*, 13^{18}) of such a gross but striking performance as the miracle of feeding. This stupid lot is not expected to remember and report so rambling a discourse. Next is Jesus' absurd declaration that he came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law—"here most clearly unhistorical" (Montefiore) when contrasted with his general hostile attitude revealed almost along with it. Wernle considers destruction or fulfilment of the law a theological question, and Jesus being a layman, the question was altogether outside the field of his vision. Logically as well as chronologically it could not occur to him. "For that statement belongs in its present form to the age after St. Paul, and is intended to formulate the result of the struggles of the apostolic age" (*Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. I, p. 88). Mr. Montefiore too disputes its authenticity, and holds "its meaning, if it be authentic, somewhat doubtful." (*The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 80). The character of the Sermon as an interpolation comes out very glaringly from the textual criticism also. Matthew's authority is Mark, and the Sermon is not found in Mark. Matthew introduces it. "To the end of his fourth chapter he," says Dr. George Salmon, F.R.S., "has been in close contact with Mark, but then he breaks off to report the discourse which occupies his fifth, sixth and seventh chapters. In the eighth chapter he comes again into contact with Mark", (*The Human Element in the Gospels*, p. 109). The import is clear and it can not be hid under a bushel. No white-washing avails here. The Sermon was most assuredly interpolated into the narrative. Thus there is no end of the troublesome points raised by critical history. But we will discuss only one more broad question, the question of the gospel Pharisees—unjustified and unjustifiable attack on whom is a scandal of history. Think of it, to call that generation a generation of vipers which produced Hillel and Philo. History indeed! The whole

evangelic conception of the Pharisee, as historical criticism has disclosed, is absurd and inaccurate to a degree, and faulty from both the ethical and historical view-points. And as a big slice of Jesus' exhortations consisted of the denunciations of the Pharisees, the question must be threshed to the bottom. The impartial reader of the Bible feels scandalised at the wholesale condemnation of a people of lofty character who rose to so heroic heights of patriotic self-sacrifice during their struggle with Rome. And according to Mr. Montefiore, a Jewish authority who has characterised the gospel picture as "a ludicrous caricature of the average Pharisee, a monstrous caricature of the Pharisaic ideal" (T. J. p. 37), five-sixths of the Jewish people at that time, including the very poorest, were composed of the Pharisees, though the gospel narrative would have us believe that they were a haughty exclusive well-to-do gang. Nothing of the kind. The truth is quite the other way about. Friedlander has shown with concrete examples that some of the Pharisees were abjectly poor and miserable. When from independent but authoritative sources one is told that humility is a virtue not only sternly inculcated but assiduously practised by the Pharisees, there being black sheep in every fold, the last drop of respect for the authority of the Biblical teaching is shed from one's mind. This information makes havoc of the claim for the originality of the gospel of Jesus, because "blessed are the meek and humble"—is a highly spoken of gospel exhortation. "Of all virtues, humility is the greatest", so teaches the Rabbi (O. T. A., p. 439). Only two conclusions are possible under the circumstances—either Jesus was not a Jewish Rabbi, or the whole thing was fabricated in his name later on by uninformed persons in a changed environment. Yes, historically considered the gospel Pharisee appears to be the manufactured background of a fiction. "The description of the Jewish teachers in the gospels," maintains Mr. McCabe in an elaborate historical discussion, "is false in spirit and detail"; again, it "is an outcome of the later conflict of Jew and Christian (*The Sources*, p. 162). Chwolson, a Jewish authority on the subject, declares : "In the teaching and sayings of Jesus there was nothing that could offend the religious feeling of any one educated according to the Pharisaic laws and acquainted with the Pharisaic—that is to say, Rabbinical—literature" (as quoted in *Witnesses*, p. 235). But the Pharisees of the second century when the gospels were actually compiled serve the gospellers' purpose excellently well. Because the Pharisees, by that time, turned out to be the bitterest enemies of the Jesuine movement as the messianic predictions failed to materi-

Attacks on Pharisees scandalous.

alise ; and now the Christians, on the other hand, mostly consisting of the Gentile converts began to support the Roman Government against the Jewish national aspirations. Moreover, "these heads of the community [*i. e.*, the gospel Pharisees whose demand a Roman Governor is unable to ignore] who allow themselves to be called by Jesus hypocrites, blind, serpents, and generation of vipers, calmly submit to these insults before the crowd, put their hands in their pockets, plot the destruction of Jesus, and meantime allow him to teach in the temple and the synagogue", cogently argues Professor Drews—"these are certainly not historical personalities, especially when we observe that none of them is personally described or named" as this custom is found in the Talmud, and the Talmud covers the gospel period too (W. H. J., p. 257). In order to make the assurance doubly sure we will cite two more Hebrew authorities, because the treatment meted out to the Pharisees is one of the most salient points by which to expose the unhistorical character of the gospel narrative, and on which no trust can any longer be put. Gerald Friedlander, Minister of the Western Synagogue, London, agreeing with Mr. Montefiore in his characterisation of the picture of the Pharisee in the gospels, remarks : "They are party documents, written long after the events they record." (*The Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 36). The other eminent authority is Dr. I. Abrahams of the Cambridge University. An additional importance is attached to his opinion, as he is very unwilling to fly in the face of any traditional view, and it is on account of this cautiousness on his part, so orthodox a Christian scholar as Dr. William Sanday, a Bampton Lecturer and the reputed author of the *Inspiration*, has attached to his scholarship the epithet "humane". Even such a cautious writer has been constrained to observe : "The context in which the phrase "whited sepulchres" appears is a sweeping and unrestrained attack on the Pharisees. Much of Matthew xxiii, there is critical reason of assuming, belongs to a period later than Jesus, and reflects an antipathy which grew during the struggle of the new faith to find a home in the abode of the old. The assault on Pharisees almost amounts to an assault on Pharisaism." (*Pharisaism and Gospels*, 2nd series, p. 30) The subject betrays a damaging amount of ignorance on the part of the gospel-writers, and it proves to the hilt that the gospels were never written in the *Phariseesthân*.

To the special charge that the Pharisees, while themselves on the safeside, loaded others with heavy burdens, Mr. Montefiore replies that it "is historically inaccurate, and in all probability it was never made by the historic Jesus". Here the critic has made a fruitful suggestion that

this charge has been used by the interpolator as a peg on which to hang the other interpolation—that of easy yoke and light burden, the intrusive character of which needs no elucidation. Because Jesus throughout demanded the renunciation of the uttermost all as a condition for his discipleship (Mt. 16[24] ; Mk. 8[34] ; Lk. 9[23]). This could not be otherwise, it being an essential virtue of Essenism out of which Christianity grew, at least, in one aspect. The Essenees had to surrender their personal property in order to become a member of their religious brotherhood. Says Dr. Schurer: "The strongest tie by which the members were united was absolute community of goods" (Work cited, Div. II, vol. ii, p. 196). But this is the logic of all interpolators in all lands. The writer who took upon himself the task of writing the chapter on Sitá's exile did not forget to interpolate her fiery ordeal, as a foil, in the *R'm'yana*. It is a problem, however, how Jesus' cross all of a sudden turned so easy. The mystery is solved when we know that the whole thing is a transcription from Dionysiak *mysteries*. But that is another story for which see *infra* Chap. XVIIIc. So we could most appropriately bring this anachronistic part of the Biblical teaching to a close with the following pointed remark of Mr. McCabe: "We can only say that, if Christ taught anything like the things here attributed to him, he must have been singularly ignorant of the teaching of the two great rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, whose teachings were at that time on the lips of every Pharisee in Judæa" (*The Sources*, p. 162). By implication the conclusion is that the thing did not happen in Judea in the first century. But while on this subject, I can not resist the temptation to refer to another authority. The Rev. R. Travers Herford, B.A. is a devout Unitarian and a profound Hebrew scholar. His *The Pharisees* has been recently published. In reviewing this book the London *Inquirer*, May 1924, writes: "A very important section of the book is one dealing with the attitude of early Christians towards the Pharisees, as exhibited in the New Testament. Very frankly, Mr. Herford, a Christian with evidently a profound sense of something unique in the personality of Jesus, and with a vivid appreciation of the special fitness of the Christian type of culture to draw to itself that Gentile world which lay for the most part quite beyond the influence of Judaism, admits, nay, urges that the hostile and often fragmentary references to the Pharisaism in the New Testament are violently unfair if taken as a representation of that system as a whole. He not unaptly points out that the Belfast Orangeman would not be relied upon to give a full and true account of the Roman Catholic Church".*

* "There was sharp antagonism between the one side and the other ; and a

To the last remark, made in appreciation of a Unitarian by a Unitarian brother, I, as a Hindu, take exception. When there is true spirituality, in the Hindu connotation of the term, grown in a man, the contrary of such an injustice, however unwittingly done, is not an unusual phenomenon. Look at the calm and serene figure of Pandit S'ivanáth S'ástri of the Sádháran Brahma Samaj. His Visvanath Tarkabhushan of the *Yugántar*, his *Men I Have Seen*, his delineation of his maternal uncle's family in his *Autobiography* conclusively prove that the honour of the R. C. Church is quite safe in the hands of a pious Hindu Orangeman. However, it is an ordinary affair of human life that when the party strife is rampant injustice is done by one party to the other at the heat of the moment. But, making an allowance for all this, the unmitigated injustice done by the New Testament to Judaism in general and Pharisaism in particular is without its parallel in the history of religious controversies.

Progressive element in Judaism.

As in Hinduism the scriptures are sharply divided into *Jnanakánda* and *Karmakánda*, so in Judaism, as we are informed by Mr. Herford, into Halachah and Haggadah. The latter made Judaism progressive, and allowed it not to be stereotyped as the readers of the New Testament would be inclined to believe, but kept "it always open to revision and amendment, always subject to fresh consideration" (*The Pharisees*, p. 113). So the odium of a hidebound system does not adhere to Judaism. In the case of Hinduism that fate has been averted by the well authorised canons of interpretation, and in the case of Judaism, by Haggadah But the New Testament abounds in passages which conclusively prove that the authors were quite ignorant of this all important factor in that ancient religion. Says the same authority: "Paul, who as a former Jew did not know what else was in Torah besides Halachah, has inflicted upon the Jews an injury without excuse by steadily ignoring that other element, in order to build upon that omission his argument for the superiority of the Gospel over the Law" (p. 78). Did Paul on a purpose misrepresent the Law? If so, he turns out worthless as a moral teacher. Or he had no knowledge of the Pharisaic religion. In that case he was not a Jew worth the name. But, in fact, Herford in common with a host of others who base their opinion on the traditional

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calm, dispassionate and accurate judgment of the one by the other is as little to be expected and as seldom found as a calm, dispassionate and accurate judgment of the Roman Catholic Church by a Belfast Orangeman" (*The Pharisees*, p. 116). The review has taken precedence over the original as I got the book after I had read the review.

view about the epistolary literature, ignoring the results of the New Testament criticism since the Dutch scholar, Professor Van Manen, set the ball rolling, commits a fatal mistake by uncritically assuming that the Epistles were written by Paul the Apostle. But this ignorance about the Law betrayed by their author, not here nor there but everywhere in the so-called Pauline writings, is a proof positive that the writer of the *Epistles* could not be a Jew, much less a Pharisee and a distinguished pupil of so eminent a Jewish teacher as Gamaliel. This is, of course, a subject by itself and will be attended to in its proper place. See *infra* Chaps. VII & VIII. The truth of the above remarks on the knotty issues between Jesus and Pharisees will make itself felt when we consider that people who have these long twenty centuries comtemplated the character of the gospel-Jesus as of "the God of very God", the Messiah of promise, the Saviour from Sin, have been now constrained to apply a quantity of whitewash on that character. Dr. A. T. Robertson who does not pose as an absolutely impartial and indifferent student of the tragedy of Golgotha, in spitè of his inherent prejudice that he must cherish, on his own showing against the alleged authors of that tragedy, could not help observing, that "there are probably Christians of course, [the author included] who wish that Jesus had been more temperate in his language about the Pharisees as he is reported in Matt. xxiii, or who even hope that the Evangelist has exaggerated, for dramatic reasons, the words of the meek and lowly Nazarene on this occasion (*The Pharisees and Jesus*, p *138*). Any comment is unnecessary. What has this Professor of the Belfast Theological Seminary had to say if one views Jesus' claim to divine sonship as such an exaggeration? Then, a word about the sting on the tail, I mean, Jesus' apostrophe on Jerusalem with which

Lament over Jerusalem a mere quotation.

a vigorous denunciation of the Pharisees was brought a to close (Matt. 23^{37-39}). All impartial critics agree that the *finale* of this long drawn vituperation could not be indited before the fall of Jerusalem, 36 years after the traditional date of the death of Jesus *i. e.* 70 A. D.: "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." This is no general observation but the record of a particular event. We can not accept it to be a prediction as we do not believe in miracles. It goes without saying that this part is not included in the Sermon. If the passage is absurd in *Matthew*, it is almost tragical in *Luke*, 13^{34-35}. Says Dr. Carpenter's "It is startling, at first sight, that such a lament over the ancient city should be put into the Teacher's mouth in Galilee." And its different parts are disjointed. What is the meaning of the words "how often would I have

gathered thy children together"? It would have some meaning introduced into them in *St. John* who sent Jesus to Jerusalem several times. These really are not words that could be spoken by Jesus at all. Some clue is found from *Luke* 1$^{49-51}$ where the discourse about the killing of the prophets reappears with the introduction: "Therefore also said the wisdom of God." Now our authority triumphantly remarks: "The whole now becomes clear. The entire passage is a quotation from some lost visions in which the divine Wisdom was the speaker. Wisdom sent forth the prophets and scribes; Wisdom desired again and again to gather the children of the mother-city beneath her shelter, but they would not" (*The First Three Gospels*, pp. 296–297). Of what a mess the gospel-makers made of old materials, this is only a hint.

However, that the Sermon can not be put to the credit of Jesus is agreed upon on all hands whose verdict carries any weight. Such an eminent authority as Carl von Weizsacker is of that opinion. "The great discourses in Matthew's Gospel everywhere," says the savant, "reveal their origin in the practical wants of the Church." And discussing about the absurdity of the situation under which the Sermon is said to have been delivered and about the ludicrousness of the idea that Jesus began his ministry by delivering a kind of catechism Weizsacker concludes: "The discourse as Matthew has adopted it, was in fact a kind of code, but such as originated in and was designed for the Church" (*The Apostolic Age*, vol. ii, p. 46).

b. Matter.

It is a general notion that God is a teacher, and in early religions, savage religions not exempted, God is made responsible for certain moral laws which are binding on the believers of his cult. So, it is quite in keeping with this conception that certain moral teachings, mostly "irreconcilable with well-grounded moral principles" as Schmiedel has characterised them (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p. 70), however hackneyed they may now be found, and for the most part, current coins as they were at the time of compilation, should be fathered on Jesus Christ when he was made the god of a cult. Of course, in this sense he is only a development from early forms. Yahweh was a teacher. With "Teach me Thy way, O Lord" the devotee would approach Him (*The Old Testament and After*, p. 128). The Lord of the *New* should not be outdone by the Lord of the *Old*. So the Sermon on the Mount came into existence "fit for use as a written cult-code of a primitive sort but extremely unfit for oral communication to a popular audience" (C. M.,

Necessity of making Jesus a Teacher.

p. 403). This is to be particularly noted here that it was a common practice among the Jews at the beginning of the present era to string together moral maxims for didactic purposes. It has been proved beyond the least shadow of a doubt that the *Bhagabat Gitá* did not form a part of the original *Mahábhárata*. It is a later interpolation. In the opinion of Bankim Chandra, an eminent Bengali author, it was compiled from the alleged utterances of S'reekrishna and other teachers sown broadcast in that huge epic. This is exactly the case with the much-made-of Sermon, every bit of which can be traced to one or other book of Jewish origin. It is under the pressure of such logic of facts that so staunch an advocate of the historicity of Jesus as J. Weiss has, in despair, admitted the possibility that "not a single word of Jesus has been preserved and that everything has been put into his mouth." And this is proved by the very nature of the case. "The fact that none of the Pauline epistles quotes any of the Jesuine teachings, and that the first Clementine epistle alludes to but one or two," says Mr. Robertson, "is a reason for holding that they came very slowly into existence." (S. H. C, pp. 73-74).

We get the Sermon from the Talmud and the Old Testament, so it is not required that a Son of God should be made to sit on the mountain to give it to the multitude. As a matter of fact the Sermon is in its entirety pre-Christian. A century before the Christian era a much maligned Pharisee wrote a book called the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs** which, according to such an eminent

Sermon pre-Christian.

* Edited by Canon Charles with an *Introduction*. It supplies the gospel framers and epistle makers not only their moral principles but "origins or anticipations for the pseudo-historic data in the Gospels......The notion that the Twelve Apostles are to rule over the tribes in the Messianic kingdom is merely an adaptation of the teaching in the Testaments that the twelve sons of Jacob are so to rule. There too appears for the first time in Jewish literature the formula "on His right hand", and a multitude of close textual parallels" (*The Historical Jesus*, p. 13). In this book salvation was promised to the Gentiles. The book was written in the second century B. C. In its Greek version even, it is pre-Christian. It was originally written in Hebrew. Linguistic criticism proves this. Says Dr. Charles: "Though the vocabulary is Greek, the idiom is frequently Hebrew, and foreign to the genius of the Greek language."

"Proper names which are lost in the Greek can frequently be restored by retranslation in Hebrew."

"When we find, in the case of obscure or unintelligible passages that the source of obscurity or unintelligibleness in the Greek becomes clear on translation into Hebrew, we may with certainty conclude that our Greek text is a translation from the Hebrew." (*Hibbert Journal*, Apri 1905).

orthodox Christian scholar as Canon R. H. Charles, "contains the most remarkable statement on the subject of forgiveness in all ancient literature," of course, not excluding the gospels. And why is the Pharisee vilified in such unmeasured terms in the gospels? Because it is an established canon of literary honesty well attested by psychology that in order to diminish the sting of indebtedness, he to whom you are indebted must be abused right and left! However, in the following terms Canon Charles has set forth the indebtedness of Jesus to the *Patriarchs*: "That our Lord was acquainted with them, and that His teaching presupposes them, we must infer from the fact that the parallel is so perfect in thought and so close in diction between them and Luke 17[3]; Matt. 18[21], the meaning of forgiveness in both cases is the highest and noblest known to us." Of course, the Buddhist literature is not known to Dr. Charles. "There would be nothing startling in our Lord's making such use of the Testaments, for", agrees Rev. Dr. Alfred Plummer; "the moral teaching of the Testaments is sometimes of the lofty character" (*An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*, p *xxxvi*.) He has also pointed out that the resemblances between *Matthew* and the *Testaments* are so numerous and so close that mere correspondence can not explain all the similarities. Being obliged to accept that it is the *Testaments* that have influenced the gospels the clergyman concludes that "not our Lord" but the Christian copyists consciously or unconsciously assimilated the wording of the *Testaments*. This is a broad hint as to what historical value should be attached to the gospels in their present form. Mr. Joseph McCabe, an opponent of the Christ-myth theory, in his *Sources* has put a special emphasis on the point that the moral teaching of the gospels when studied comparatively † is found entirely to depend on the ancient lore and in some cases totally to fail even to maintain the level of the best of that. In view of all this, is it at all too much on the part of Robertson to exclaim in indignation in the concluding portion of his book, *The Jesus Problem*: "Was it then high and noble for the Teacher to give out as his own the teaching of another, instead of acknowledging it?" (p. 230). But we accuse the Teacher wrongly. Concludes Mr. Robertson: "Is it not incomparably more likely, on every aspect of the case, that the older teaching was thus appropriated by gospel-makers bent at once on

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† "I must confess that until I studied the religions of the East, the great drama of Palestine appeared to me a drama with unintelligible antagonisms and motiveless character" (Arthur Lillie, *Buddism in Christendom*, p. vi).

giving the Divine One a high message and on securing acceptance for it by putting it in his mouth? Is not this the strict critical verdict, apart from any other issue? (Ibid). We say amen. Because it saves the face of the Divine One immeasurably more than any other verdict. At least no other supposition would preserve a modicum of the "unsurpassableness" of the Jesuine character from the moral standpoint. It will not be out of place to allude here to the Sermon on the Mount delivered by the Buddha on the Elephant's Head, a mountain near *Buddhagayá*, still traceable as a historical fact should be, briefly to the effect that man's heart is full of the fire of lust, of anger, of ignorance. Only the disciples of Buddha are free. Freed from lust and human passion they had acquired the wisdom that leads to the perfect man. They were no longer bound by the sixteen laws, for they had passed into higher regions. (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 153). Now to the Sermon itself. But we must be very brief, simply putting the seeker of truth on the right track to find it out for himself (vide especially Dr. Drew's *Witnesses*, p. 271).

Buddha's Sermon.

The sermon begins with a blessing on "the poor." "In spirit"* is

* The addition of *in spirit* has created a disturbance in the proverbial hornet's nest. Here we find another bone of contention for the exegetes. Some say,—*the poor in spirit*, "the spiritually poor," or "the inly suffering" has no intelligent sense to offer. Paulus rejects the spiritual standpoint because: "It is not to be thought for a moment that Jesus wished his followers to be *that*—He, the goodnatured friend of mirth and joviality." And the meaning of the spiritual standpoint is not at all clear either. Physical poverty one understands but what is spiritual poverty. Does it mean *poor in genius and learning* as Fritzsche suggests? Then, for one, I refuse to enter the heaven with this lot as Rájá Vali of old. The lowly or humble (तृणादपि सुनीच:) are spiritually *rich*, not poor. Therefore Olearius, and with him, Wettstein, Hermann, Michaelis, and Paulus have changed the construction and read, "Blessed in spirit are the poor." *Luke's* original reading gives no trouble. Meritoriousness of the physical poverty was accepted by the Church and *the vow of poverty* is no poverty in the spiritual sense. The Emperor Julian, ridiculing the Christians, said: "He merely wishes to confiscate their property in order that, *in the character of poor men, they may enter the kingdom of heaven.*" Who knows that the Emperor apostate did not hit upon the right view. Among the *Essenes* or *Ebonites* it was the custom to surrender one's property to the brotherhood if one was to be initiated. And we know, Judas was to see to the finances of the early Christian community. Some say, it is voluntary poverty, whatever that may mean. However, De Wette, Meyer, Neander side with *Matthew*, while Strauss, Koestlin, Hilgenfeld, Ewald advocate *Luke's* position. Baur, though siding with them, does not so strongly hold that *Luke's* is the original version. Yet this is not all of the controversy. For further information see Tholuck's *Commentary*, p. 59—71.

surely an interpolation. The First gospel wholly missed both the Psychology and the history (cp. the *Religion and the New Psychology* by W. S. Swisher) of the time.

Poor in spirit.

Jesus' was a proletarian movement. And the movement was not new at all. "In such a pre-Christian document as the "Slavonic Enoch", there are teachings which, had they occurred in the Gospels, would have been confidently cited as unparalleled in ancient literature." (Robertson's *Free-Thought*, vol. i, p. 221). One of the Enochic beatitudes is "Blessed is he who looks to raise his own hand for labour." The honest labour of the poor could not be better sanctified. This tradition only was incorporated in the gospels. It is not strange then that in the *Luke* we find the hero as friend of the poor and the oppressed. Schneider admits that probably Jesus began his mission in the synagogues and the open air of his native place gathering around him a circle of disciples as poor as himself. Nay, he goes further and says : "It must *remain an open question* whether he went to Jerusalem ......but it is just as possible that he never left Galilee and died there in obscurity. The gospel story of the entrance into Jerusalem and death of the Messiah swarms with historical and scientific impossibilities." (*Witnesses*, p. 249). Psychologically also this sympathy with the poor can be very easily explained. The Jews were an oppressed people, laid low politically also. Intensely patriotic and religious as the Jews were, after the fall of Jerusalem and the collapse of the political and national conditions of their religion, there is nothing to wonder at that they were enthusiastically thinking of the speedy advent of their national theocratic government in which the poor, as they were in all senses of the term, would come to their own; just as we Indians after the humiliation and trouble of the Punjab and the destruction of the Khiláfat, were looking for our "kingdom" in three months' time. And for this the Jews were being prepared not by John the Baptist alone but by a long series of prophets. It was not in the wilderness that the first Christians cried. It was a living fountain from which they drank. It was not a new wine. So that Schmiedel admits "that the evangelists did not need to draw their material from books alone, but from youth up they were acquainted with it from oral narration." (*Gospels*—Enc. Bib. II, col. 1869). After a very illuminating discussion on the subject, the gospel insinuation that Judaism at the time of Jesus was fossilised and spiritless has been disposed of by Dr. Drews as a shere *petitio principii* (*Witnesses* 276). Anything of moral value that the movement at the outset possessed was derived from the great fund of the Jewish proverbial wisdom, "the current money of the synagogue" as Renan sugge-

sted, so that it would not require an exceptional religious genius to accomplish the task. Therefore Dr. Drews is not far from truth when he affirms "that the words of Jesus which have come down to us were not selected by him but by the Evangelists out of tradition; since they certainly represent only an insignificant part of what Jesus could have taught" (p. 277). Mr. Robertson in *Christianity and Mythology* has shown by quoting scores of parallel passages from canonical, uncanonical and apocryphal Hebrew scriptures,—not only from the Old Testament which like our *Mahábhárata* is not a book but a library in itself, but also from the Talmud, Rabbinical literature, etc., that if the New Testament were not given a separate status from the beginning with so much hubbub, the teachings thereof could silently pass for a random selection from the Old, and the pretension of originality could not be thought of, much less entertained. And that pretension obtained a hearing simply because Christianity prevailed among the non-Jewish peoples. But in view of the theologians playing drakes and ducks* with already existing materials, the recently discovered treatise called "Slavonic Enoch" (*The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*) has come as a blue from the bolt, in as much as it contains *nine* beatitudes couched in the selfsame antithetical form of "Blessed is he" and "Cursed be he" showing that "the hortatory method of the Sermon" was not peculiar to a Divine Teacher. So the exclamation naturally comes as to Mr. Robertson: "Who can now doubt that they [beatitudes] tell of a prevailing literary mode of lists of beatitudes, and that the nine in the so called Sermon are taken from some current list, lying ready to the Christian compiler's hand?" (C. M. p. 422). So to make a long story short, we cite a few passages out of a host to match the beatitudes and

Beatitudes Pre-Christian

* Here is a fair sample to show how the theologian has gone beyond his depths. Dr. Erich Bischoff is a German scholar, but his scholarship has shipwrecked on the rock of the special pleading for the New Testament. He is an example of learning divorced from critical reason and that because of his religious partisanship. He compares Hillel's precept to the Gentile: "What offends thee, do not to thy neighbour: this is the whole law, all else is but commentary," and triumphantly pronounces the verdict: "Thus Hillel gives an *ethical* not a *religious* proposition." Robertson retarts: "Thus an utilitarian morality is the higher when "Jesus" conveys it, and the lower when a post-Christian Rabbi does so; and when a pre-Jesuine Rabbi and "Jesus" say the same thing, the Jesuine saying is accredited as religion, and the Rabbinical disparaged as a mere ethic" (C. M. p. 415). But the *Didache* already proved a hard nut and the *Slavonic Enoch* has cracked many a tooth.

maxims announced in the Sermon! For the *first* the Psalmist shows us the way: "The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me" (116^{6}). *Isaiah* anticipates the *second:* "As one whom his mother comforted, so will I comfort you" (66^{13}). In the first half of the *Psalm* (37^{11}) we find the very words for the *third*: "But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." The glory of righteousness, the theme of the *fourth* beatitude, is sung in *Isaiah* (38^{15}): "He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly shall dwell on high". The Talmud says: "Any age in which the doctrine is not found—that is to say. in which a righteous life conformable to the law, is not possible- lives in hunger". Mercy to birds and beasts is praised (*Deut.* 25^{4}; 22^{6-10}) and the *Proverbs* urges that if any one practises mercy he "findeth life, righteousness, and honour" (21^{21}). The Psalmist teaches us that one who "hath clean hands and a pure heart" "shall ascend into the hill of the Lord and stand in his holy place" (24^{3}). Peace is the *seventh* exhortation in the Sermon. To its supreme spiritual significance the Talmud draws our attention by declaring the Messiah himself to be "peace", and *Isaiah* calls him "prince of peace". "Seek peace", exclaims the Psalmist, "and pursue it" (34^{14}). The *eighth* beatitude is a development consistent with the then circumstances of the Talmudist: "Better to be persecuted than persecutor. "They who are persecuted and persecute not (non-violent indeed!), who sustain ridicule and injury and themselves do no injury (*Ahimsá*!) are the elect of God of whom it is said: "They shine like the sun". That it is only the persecuted and not the men in position who earnestly seek the "kingdom", finds an exact parallel in the present situation in India. In the gospels we only find that the blessing is bestowed on the persecuted, but the commentary was already written in the Talmud: "Were the persecutor a just man and the persecuted an impious, God would still be on the side of the persecuted". It is pretty sure that the Christian sacred books never made any attempt to imitate it, as Robertson observes. "The capacity for such thought had been shown by a number of Jewish teachers, and it was a specific result of the long sequence of wrong and oppression undergone by the Jewish people at the hands of their conquerors". (*A Short History of Freethought, vol. i, p. 221*). So a so-called "effulgent" personality is critically inadmissible to glue together these scattered thoughts. No such uncritical method is allowed in any other department of knowledge. This is a tax we are going out of our way to pay to an age-long superstition. For further details Friedlander's *Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount* should be

especially consulted. The details will show, so far it has not already been shown, that it is an artificial contrast set up by theological blindness between Jesuine and Jewish morality of the time, as there is unity in minor things also. The Lord's Prayer is not only dissected into many Old Testament phrases, but is, as a whole, declared by a competent authority, to take, "its place as originally a Jewish and not a Christian document" (Robertson). At least there is no question "that it was not uttered by Jesus in its present form" (Drews). It was not uttered by Jesus at all. Dr. Abrahams (P. G., 2nd series pp 94—108) and G. Friedlander (J. S. S. M., pp. 118 f.) have analysed the Prayer word by word, and shown that it is pre-Christian". Raising the question, "Did Jesus ever utter this prayer"? Friedlander answers in the negative, because it is found neither in *Mark* nor in *John* nor in the Pauline Epistles. Why now pray for the kingdom if it was already ushered in by Jesus? Why pray for the deliverance from the evil one if Jesus had already overcome him? And until the Dispersion the Christians adhered to the Jewish devotions "continuing steadfastly with one accord in the Temple" (*Acts*, 2⁴⁶). So the Prayer was compiled after the schism of Christianity from Judaism. Dr. Abrahams after tearing it into shreds shows that, in all respects except on the ridiculous point of man being the measure of God, it is a composition from Jewish sources and concluded that "such mosaic appearance, as the Lord's prayer really presents, is explicable on the theory that it is the work not of Jesus himself but of disciples" (101). After this we can not possibly be far astray if we regard E. Bischoff's assertion that Lord's Prayer from "our Father" to "Amen" is altogether original, to be a myth. Both "Our Father" and "Amen" have been traced by Friedlander to Jewish liturgies. A more damaging revelation is made in Robertson's *Christianity and Mythology* where the author at first quotes piecemeal, from ancient Jewish books, the different parts of the Lord's Prayer and then shows that there were several forms, all pre-Christian, in which the Prayer was in daily use among the Jews, of which the most ancient is: "O God, be thy name magnified and hallowed in the world which thou hast created according to thy good pleasure; cause thy Kingdom to come; let Redemption flourish; and let the Messiah come speedily, let thy name be celebrated" (p. 418). After trying this, that or another, the final form that was given to it in the gospel was almost copied *verbatim* from *The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles*, a pre-Christian book but latterly Christianised. Before it was discovered that the Prayer was

Lord's Prayer a tissue of older sayings.

bodily transplanted from some Jewish liturgy, the orthodox *Pádré* laid this flattering unction to his soul that "the Prayer is doubtless based upon expressions and sentiments already familiar to the Jews; indeed parallel phrases to nearly all its contents have been discovered in the Talumd. This, however, does not detract from its beauty or *originality, as a whole*" (as quoted in C. M., p. 416). Certainly not! In Bengal we have an adage to the effect: "What is sin for a man is only a sport to a God". Plagiarism is punishable criminally for men, but how *beautiful* it is in a God from whose originality it does not detract! Logic applicable in all fields of human thoughts must be thrown to the four winds when you go to make a critical estimate of the Bible. It is a notorious fact that even after the compilation of the third gospel, Christians added to their Lord's Prayer phrases already in Judaic use. However, in view of the disclosures of all these facts as clear as day light, it is only ignorance that has led the innocent clergyman, Archbishop Trench to characterise the Lord's Prayer as "that perfect form of words which, *coming immediately from Him* [Italics are ours] has borne his name" (*Notes on the Parables*, p. 328). So Klein's claim that "it is the most personal thing we have of Jesus" falls to the ground. After what is laid bare by the Biblical criticism concerning the so-called Lord's Prayer, it is the last thing that any originality would be claimed on behalf of Christ. So how can we conclude that it is mere ignorance on the part of one who presumes to write treatises on *Comparative Religion* or *History of Religion* but asserts that the Prayer is a *revelation* which evolution can not explain? It is in consequence of this a feeling not far removed from derison arises in my mind as I read F. B. Jevons' *Study of Comparative Religion* where he avers: "The theory of evolution is unable to account for or explain the revelation made in our Lord's prayer" (p. 173). Irony of history can not go further.

There are two Prayers. One (longer) in *Matthew* included in the Sermon, and the other (shorter) in *Luke* given on a different occasion, because the disciples pressed for it. This and other differences led Pfleiderer (*Primitive Christianity*, pp. 147-149) to remark that Jesus did not teach it. Naturally many questions have been raised: Has *Matthew* borrowed and amplified, or *Luke* abbreviated; are both equally historical or none at all; or, one more than the other; have they drawn from the same source or from separate sources, or drawn upon their own imagination; so on and so forth? And in conclusion no commentator agrees with his peer unless one follows another through thick and thin. No two independent opinions are the same. Meyer is a great

Lord's Prayer: *Matthew and Luke* contrasted.

authority. Discussing *Matthew's* gospel he gives one opinion, while commenting on *Luke* he forthwith changes his view (Meyer's *Commentary on the New Testament—Matthew*, vol. i, p. 204 ; and *Luke*, vol. ii, p. 133). Meyer marshals a marvellous gallaxy of fourteen witnesses against *Matthew* only to make the confusion worse confounded, because nearly the half of these witnesses turn hostile when Keim, one of the greatest, if not the greatest authority, sits in judgment and examines them (*Jesus of Nazara*, p. 338, vol. iii). The latter too practically shows no way out of the muddle. If there were a third alternative possible, I would point out Dr. Tholuck's *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount* (pp. 25 and 315) to emphasise the miserable plight the historicists are in. As for my humble self, when I read these discussions I am invariably reminded of an episode in Bankim's Bengali novel *Kapálkundalá*. A number of men and women went on a boat trip. On their way back they visited the *Sundarbunds*. In their hurry one of their mates, Navakumár, was left behind, and owing to a perverse selfishness they made no attempts to recover him. The people in the boat lost no time to come to the agreement that Navakumár was devoured by one of the tigers that infested the *jungle*. Now, when they reached home they found no difficulty in persuading the simple villagers to accept their version *as they were eye-witnesses*. But they themselves came to blows when a dispute arose as to the length of the tiger they saw with their own eyes carry Navakumár off. On this point there was no previous arrangement. The eye-witnesses drew upon their own imagination and formed their subjective opinions independently, as there was no objective reality to fall back upon. *There was really no tiger*. They had to fight over a shadow. So no two men agreed. This is exactly the case with the gospel story. There is a stipulation, so to say, among the theologians that one Jesus was crucified. But ask any detail, important or otherwise of whatever description, the eye-witnesses, individually or collectively, all of them virtually bear witness to 'no-tiger'.

c. Miscellaneous

As to the mental adultery the Talmud declares : "Whoever regards even a little finger of a woman has already violated matrimony in his heart." As to the sexual relation in general, we find, Jesus was against contracting marital relation as such, as in the kingdom to come, there would be no marriage. Yet he was framing rules against divorce. Fancy, one seriously entertaining the hope of, and earnestly believing

in, the speedy end of all marriage relations in the coming angelic order of things, was preparing a moral code, unjust as it is, for the regulation of divorce, and that against the tradition! Such a duplication, say, of a mystic waiting for the imminent end of the old order and of the moralist exhorting people about details of life in the future in which they will be no more—this is a piece of incongruity which one can never expect to find in the life of a real person. It is just a *pauránic* figure got up by interpolations piled upon interpolations. And this code of divorce, though belauded to the seventh heaven by M. Loisy, is only an echo of *Malachi* (2^{14-16}) and the Talmud. Verily, if we do not forget all ancient teachings the question of the gospel originality does not arise. See *Witnesses* (pp. 271–280). To look first to the kingdom of God is enjoined by the Prophets. To meet the non-judgment argument of Jesus we have better ones in: "Judge every one as favourably as possible;" "Judge not thy neighbour until thou hast stood in his position," and "With the measure with which a man measures shall it be meted unto him," (*Talmud*). "The fault from which thou art not free, blame not in another" is favourably compared with the "mote and beam" argument of the gospel, because the latter is guilty of exaggeration. The "Seek and ye shall find" advice is matched by *Jeremiah* 29^{13}: "And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." The Talmudist says: "The doors of prayer are never closed." The warning against the false prophets is found in *Jeremiah* also. When a man approaches the altar, the purity of heart and not the piety of the sacrifice is insisted on by Isaiah and other prophets too numerous to quote. Alms-giving, condemnation of divorce, doing good in secret, praying and fasting, forgiving injuries—all are from Jewish teachings. *Isaiah* demands the inward and not the external fast, and commands to avoid many words in prayer. But what about the non-resistance to the evil-doer? Why, a famous Jewish proverb inculcates: "If any demand thy ass, give him the saddle also." And Isaiah's Servant of God is found to present his back to those who beat him and his cheeks to those who pluck his hair. Much has been made of *Matt.* 5^{48}: "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." The spirit of it is a direct quotation from *Deut.* 18^{13}: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God," and its form from *Lev.* 19^{2}: "Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy." And this is not all. When *Luke's* version: "Be ye merciful even as your father is merciful" is compared with *Matthew's* similar saying and both are referred to *Ps.* 18^{5}; "With the merciful thou, O God, wilt show thyself merciful;

Mystic and moralist go ill together.

with the perfect man thou wilt show thyself perfect," one interesting fact is disclosed that the two scribes have divided the spoils of the Old Testament between themselves—the one appropriating "perfect" and the other, "merciful" and this is not a chance occurrence. There seems to have been such a contract between the two evangelists. Robinson Smith in his *Solution of the Synoptic Problem* (p. 10) shows : "Of *Mark*'s phrase 'at even when the sun was set' (1^{32}). *Matthew* appropriates the first half 'at even' (8^{16}), *Luke* the second half 'when the sun was set (4^{40}). Of twenty six such duplicate phrases of *Mark*, *Matthew* uses only the first part in twenty one instances, *Luke* only the second." They seem to have made a pact to that effect. The teaching about the mental purity is not the monopoly of the New Testament. Joma (29a) enjoins : "Immoral thoughts are worse than immoral deeds." P. Rabbatic (12^{46}) teaches : "Do not think that he is an adulterer who, by his sinful act, has sinned ; he also is an adulterer who lusts with his eyes" (cp. *Job*, 24^{15}). So Jesus' emphasis in his teaching is a mere boast, there is nothing new. We conclude with the following from N. Rab 8^{5} : "When a man has the intention to sin, it is as though he had already sinned against God".

The Sermon is a compilation.

All authorities agree that the Sermon is a compilation which is termed "conglomerate' by Schmiedal himself. Tertullian, the old Church Father, took it to be "really a condensed summary of the Old Testament teaching," and quoted verses to illustrate and explain the Sermon (*Jewish Sources* p. 16). Yet, after this, when Herford remarks about Jesus : "It may be truly said that he took the Pharisees entirely by surprise, when they began to be aware of his presence in their midst" (*The Pharisees*, 201), enlightened people will only be amused and set it down to no other solid ground than to the scholar's well-known Unitarian bias for the Teacher-Jesus. There was nothing in him except his rudeness to be surprised at by the Jewish multitude. So no one except *Matthew* would think that a Jewish crowd was "astonished" at the teaching of Jesus. An illiterate old man was weeping when *Bhágavata* was being explained in Sanskrit. When questioned, the man point-blank replied that he heard it was *Rásalilá* that was being explained and how could he help weeping ? The evangelist adopted this man's logic. As the Messiah was teaching, the people could not but be astonished, with or without rhyme and reason. However, after a laborious search into the whole matter, Mr. Robertson has given us the following critical estimate : "Those laymen who are content to pick out of the gospels certain teachings such as the Sermon on

the Mount, and call these "Christianity" have not realised how completely documentary analysis has disintegrated the teachings into pre-Jesuine Jewish and post Jesuine Gentile matter. The latest professional analysis", adds the critic "leaves no Jesuine "Teaching" save an eschatology, a doctrine of "last things", coming from a visionary Messiah with no political or social message". (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 30). Yes, this is the last word on the subject. Jesus as a teacher is a latter-day invention. When Jesus was identified with the *Logos* he was necessarily made a *Teacher*. So in *John's* gospel we have long didactic discourses. But this gospel has been rejected by all. If could long discourses be invented why not short ones by less literary compilers ? The truth is that the miracle-mongering supernatural being, in which no educated man believes now-a-days, is as much a construction as the teaching *Logos* whose teachings have now been found scattered among the pre-gospel teachers of Jewish origin. The higher criticism of the New Testament is suffering from the same malady as did that of the Old formerly. Tradition misleads. That is the universal experience of all scientific explorers. The internal evidence forthcoming from the careful study of the Book of the *Judges* has brought to light that the story of the tabernacle in the desert is a fiction. Caught in the mazes of this fiction the critics were all along wandering in the wilderness of the *Exodus* and the *Mosaic* legislation. So the tradition of a teaching God, a predecessor of Paul, has muddled the inquiry ; whereas a critical study of Paul's epistles would have shown us the way out of the wood. If Jesus was a teacher, why did not Paul quote from his teachings ? The teaching Jesus is a superstructure on Paul's crucified Son of God. Give up the tradition of this false chronology which higher criticism demands, and the narrative becomes as clear as day-light. In this way after driving a coach and six through the arguments of those, especially of Schmiedel who labour much to reconstruct a teaching human Jesus out of the *debris* of the old tradition, Mr. Robertson arrives at the only possible conclusion that "the teaching Jesus of the gospels is wholly a construction of the propagandists of the cult as even is the wonder-working God" (*Pagan Christs*, p. 237).

CHAPTER V.

The Parables of Jesus.

Of the sayings of Jesus the Parables come next to the Sermon. They have got the repute of uniqueness and unsurpassable excellence for the ignorant dogmatist. But the well informed scholar tells a very different tale. "It is generally felt," observes Dr. Issac Abrahams, "that Jesus was not the originator of the method of teaching by Parables.

Jewish Origin

Even Julicher, who advances so strenuous a plea for the originality of the *contents* of the New Testament Parables does not claim—of course in the presence of the Old Testament Parables can not claim—that the method is a new creation. Bousset roundly asserts [*Jesus* p. 30] that, though as an exponent of Parabolic art Jesus "spoke" while the Rabbis "stammered", nevertheless "Jesus owed the vehicle on which he mainly relied in his popular preaching—the Parables—to the synagogue and the scribes" (*Studies in Phariseeism and the Gospels*, first series, p. 90). In view of the systematic and systematised parabolic teachings of the two great masters, Hillel and Shammai, to say that the Rabbis only stammered is nothing but theological blindness. Of the "originality of the *contents*" we shall speak presently.

The East speaks in parables. So there is nothing strange that, in the gospel narratives, the evangelists taking their cue from *Isaiah* (6^{9-10}) especially as to the manner of the spread of "the kingdom of heaven", have made an oriental speak in parables to explain certain spiritual truths, rather, to hide them from outsiders that they might be of exclusive use afterwards for the initiated only (*Matt.* 13^{13} ; 13^{34-35}) and *Mark* (4^{12}; 4^{34}). Here also the gospellers have slavishly copied, not only from the Prophet (28^{11-12}) and the Pslam (78^{2}), but directly perhaps from Plato's *Theactetus* (152) where Protagoras ("almighty wise man" Protagoras! So his method must be attributed to "Our Lord") is accused by Socrates of speaking in enigmatical parable to the multitude, but telling his truth in secret to his disciples. In the *Brihadáranyaka* (4-2-2) gods are said to be fond of this method : परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः प्रत्यक्षद्विषः । Cp also *Aitareya* 1. 3. 14. We, in India, are so accustomed to such sustained and elaborate allegorical interpretations of high spiritual themes, and also so inured to the view that certain things are for the initiated only, that the parables appear to us as a fleabite in the ocean. But certain Christian theologions, finding no nobler occupation or finding their occupation already gone or on the point of going, are bestow-

ing an altogether artificial encomium on the parables—thereby provok ing a merciless criticism of them, and a strenuous enquiry into their details so that the hollowness of the vaunt has been hopelessly exposed.

Sermon and Parables inconsistent.

But before we proceed any further, one thing that most strikes the reader of the Bible must be accounted for. We have already considered the merit of the Sermon on the Mount. It has at least this much in its favour that it was given out by a publie preacher. Can the parabolic teachings whose avowed object is simply to mystify—to hide the meaning from the public, be attributed to the same man who taught to "knock and it shall be opened" ? The one is a public man of action, the other is a mystic. A teacher may change the method of his teaching. But how can such a tremendous change be effected in so short a time ? Jesus' public career is said by some to have been confined to a dozen months only. The mystic sayings, no doubt, were, in those days common in the secret societies of the Gnostics or the Essenes. But how to explain the other role Jesus is made to play ? The mystification which is also based on the prophecies of *Isaiah*, is not the only mystical characteristic of the parables. Jesus is made to adopt that particular mode of teaching, because it was so laid down by the Prophet *(Matt.* xiii, *Mark* iv, *Luke* viii). It smacks somewhat mythical that a teacher invariably speaks either to fulfil a prophecy or to hide his light under a bushel. Of the two sets of antithetic writings, on the other hand, if one set be taken as historical the other turns out to be hopelessly false. Critically considered they both together should be taken to be the countervailing interpolations of totally different schools or sectaries as is pressed by Mr. Robertson who, taking all the facts into consideration, contends : "If in the posthumous accounts of any ancient historical personage who had left no written remains, we found ascribed to him two sets of teachings so different as.........ascribed to Jesus, we should without hesitation pronounce the tradition false." (*Christianity and Mythology*, p. 425). However, the internal evidence of the parables themselves is not less damaging. The criticism and the comparative study of the parables show that instead of being inimitable they are themselves bad imitations, in some cases at least. In other cases, in reproduction there has been made no improvement upon the original. Some parables should not have at all been incorporated in the gospels. For example, the parables (*Luke* xi and xviii) of the man getting loaves at midnight from the friend, and of the widow having been avenged of her enemy through the judge. In the former, the friend gives not

Bad imitations of Talmud.

out of affection, but because of the applicant's importunity, and in the latter, the judge grants her prayer not owing to the justice of her case, but to avoid the worry and troubles the woman would otherwise cause. There may be nothing reprehensible in the parables themselves, but the conception of God they present us with indicates a much lower order of culture than what is claimed for the New Testament. The peculiarity of these parables is the monologue indulged in by their hero representing the God of the kingdom, which degrades his character so much as to bring him down to the level of an ordinary man of unfixed principle. But all this trouble is for the unnecessary zeal of the gospeller to incorporate the peculiar idea of the power of prayer on which the Ebionites of the day were giving particular stress. But the writer handled the matter very clumsily.

First, take the parable of the Sower. It has got many versions. Clement's version differs from that of the gospel. It is not surprising that the parable is found among the pre-Christian Gnostic sects, *e. g.*, the Naassanes,* called also the Essenes, whom gospel Jesus is, in many respects, made to represent. Dr. Smith in his *Der V. Jesus* has shown that the parable is "a modification and adaptation of a much older allegory in which a Gnostic teaching illustrated the sowing by God of the seed springing from the Logos which produces the world." See also *Ecce Deus*, p. 36, where it is stated that the parable was originally an allegory of Creation (cp. "The Sower soweth the word." *Mark* 4[14]).

The gospel parable of the merchant's pearl is scarcely an improvement upon the Talmud, going back to Proverbs 8[10]: "Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies and all the things that may be desired

* The influence of Buddhism on this sect is not questioned. Swami Satynánda says that "the word Essene is found in Majjhimo Nikáyo" *(The Origin of Christianity*, p. 204). But I have not been able to verify it. He, in his support, quotes the authority of Beal who finds *Essenoi* and *Essaioi* variants of Pali words *Isino* and *Isayo*. He refers also to Mr. Edmunds' *Buddhist and Christian Gospels* where the words are traced to *Sanjjutta Nikáya*. (Ibid p. 56). Referring to *Metthew* X where Jesus charges his disciple to abide with "worthy" only the Swami asserts that according to Josephus' *Wars of the* Jews the word "worthy" only means an "Essene initiate." (p. 64). There are two parables of the Sower in the Buddhistic literature, traced to the time of the Master himself. The *Sutta Nipáta* version is of a quite different import. The Chinese Dhammapada has "the comparison of good deeds to seeds sown on good and bad soil, according to the nature of the people, illustrating the truth that in bad people the passions choke the growth of merit." *Buddhism and its Christian Critics* by Paul Carus. We have also a Buddhistic parable of the mustard seed.

are not to be compared to it." The parable of the net also is matched by the Talmud (*Schabbat*, fol. 119, col 1).

Is not the parable of the dishonest servant (*Matt.* 18[25]) inspired by God's saying to men : "Thy soul comes daily to me when thou sleepest, and renders its account, and remains my debtor. Yet I give thee back thy soul, which is my property. So do thou each evening return his pledge to thy debtor ?" (Talmud). Here I am reminded of the Prasnopanishad : "स यथा सोम्य वयांसि वासो वृक्षं सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ते । एवं ह वै तत् सर्व्वं पर आत्मनि सम्प्रतिष्ठते"

We read in the Talmud : "A king hired labourers among whom was one of great power. This man did the king summon to himself, and held speech with him. And when the night fell the hired labourers came to receive there hire. But the king gave to the favoured labourer the same hire which he had given unto the others. Then they murmured and said : We have laboured the whole day, and this man hath laboured but two hours. Yet there is given unto him the same wages that we have received. And the king sent them away saying : This man hath done more in two hours than ye have done during the whole of the day." To this Dr. Drews remarks : "The parable is quite consistent and unassailable. But the Biblical parallel—the parable of the workers in the vineyard—is clearly distasteful, since the king attempts to justify his conduct by a purely arbitrary feeling, and regards his lack of justice as a virtue (*Matthew* xx, 15). It has not been improved in the mouth of Jesus, where it is made to illustrate the theme that in the king dom of heaven the last shall be first and the first last; that many are called, but few chosen (xx, 16)." Is it the beginning of the doctrine of predestination ? However, in this parable there is a clear allusion to the rejection of the claims of precedence of the Jewish Christians though they were called first. But by no stretch of imagination this event could be placed in the lifetime of Jesus. The parable of the two sons (*Matt.* xxi) reminds us one of the Talmudic maxims that "the just promise little but do much". And that of the rebellious workers in the vineyard is suggested by *Isaiah* V. The parable of the marriage feast is found in the Talmud: "A king held a great banquet to which many guests were invited. They were requested to bathe, anoint themselves, and put on their festive garments, in order to appear worthily before the king"...If what follows is full of crudities and improbabilities, its new Testament rendering is altogether absurd and ridiculous, and therefore a parody of the Talmudic account. "Unique" in its grotesqueness no doubt ! Moreover, *Matthew* (22[7]) reports that the angry king "burnt up their city." Here we are in touch with an historical fact. "It is evident

that this feature was introduced into the parable after the event, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem" (Strauss) which took place in 70 A. D. while Jesus is said to have sealed his mouth on the cross in 34 A. D. The parable of the ten virgins expresses the same thought, (*Matt.* xxv) but ends equally unnaturally. These fanciful pictures do not bring us in contact with an actual life. And the parable of the master entrusting his talents to his three servants before going for a travel is no better. If this be the nature of the kingdom of heaven, then in shudder, we pray : "God, save us from our friend". Because His Satanic Majesty's kingdom can not be more unjust. A friend suggests a new prayer: King Satan, lead us to Hell! In this connection, we refer *Matthew.* 25^{29} to a Rabbinical proverb : "He who gathers shall have more added unto him, but he who suffers a loss, from him shall yet more be taken."

Luke's parable of the lost sheep (15^{4}) we read thus in the Talmud : "A muleteer drove twelve span before him, all laden with wine. One of them strayed into the yard of a Gentile. Then the driver left the others, and sought the one that had broken loose", and that of the lost piece of silver also : "When a man loses a piece of gold, he lights many lamps in order to seek it. If a man takes all this trouble for the sake of temporal things, how much the more should he when there is question of treasures that keep their worth in the world to come." The latter should not have been embodied here in the gospel as it weakens the original gospel idea. But the evangelists lose their head where an opportunity offers itself to steal from a Jewish authority. However, both the parables are illustrations of the rabbinical theory "that the penitent was a stage above the pious." (Drews). The Talmudic parable of the unjust steward, though not a very happy one, has been rendered quite ludicrous in the gospel (*Luke*, 16^{8}) with the addition that "the Lord commended the unjust steward." Here was really a just cause for the audience to be "astonished," when Jesus taught this parable! The unnecessary huddling together of parables in these two chapters seriously brings in the verdict of 'losing head'. As regards the parable of the rich man and the poor Lazarus, not only the contents are there in the Talmud, but the conclusion also almost in the same words of *Luke* 16^{25} is there : "Because you have no share in that life you receive reward in this world." According to Dr. Drews "the comparison of the Messiah to a bridegroom, and his coming to that of a thief in the night must have been very common among the Jews, as we find it also in the *Revelation*, originally a Jewish work" (*Witnesses*, vide, pp. 280—288). The parables

of the rich fool, of multiplying food and of miraculous helping in the marriage feast are found in the Tathâgata's life ; but turning water into wine is un-Buddhistic. It has its origin in the mysteries of Dionysos, the wine-god. See *infra* Chap. XIX a.

Mary and Martha not historical.

The story of Mary and Martha bears in its very body the stamp of latter-day invention when Christianity had already been accepted by the pagan world. It is an allegory how Jews and Gentiles viewed the cult of Jesus, Martha representing the former and Mary the latter. Mary received him with joy, while Martha* was still troubling herself much with customs and ceremonies, and trying to dissuade her sister (Smith's *Ecce Deus*). Zeller for the first time drew our attention to this peculiar nature of the parable in his *Theological Annual* 1843. The parable of the rich man and the poor Lazarus already referred to is of the same import the rich man representing the Jew. The cursing of the fig tree is an allegory of this nature. To take it literally is a piece of sheer tomfoolery, the allegory is a condemnation of the Old Testament Dispensation which does no longer produce any fruits being superseded by the New Testament. The miraculous feeding † is also an allegory, the *Logos* breaking his body and offering it to all—a reminiscence of an early magical rite. Among the Gnostics, it was an allegory. That *Logos* is the bread of life is the theme of the Fourth gospel also. The *Logos* gave himself freely and the world came into existence. And the world lives not by bread but by the *word* of God. This is a rite which, combined with some others, gave rise to the legend of the Lord's Supper In both the miracle and the supper the ceremony is ever described in the following prescribed terms which were considered to

Miraculous feeding an ancient allegory.

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* Martha means "mistress" and by Bethany where the event is related to have taken place is, in Aramaic, the then spoken language of the place, meant "the house of her who worries." The gospel-Martha who received Jesus into her house was the mistress of the house and she worried also.

† Compare the story of the feeding, in a waterless desert, of the host of Dioyysos, one of the prototype of the gospel Jesus, in his campaign against the Titans. The *Mahâbhârata* tells us that a bit of rice with a morsel of vegetable was sufficient for Sreekrishna to feed the host of Durvâsâ. There is a Buddhist tradition that the Buddha fed five hundred brethren in the monastary of *Jetavana* out of a basket of cakes prepared for two persons. Then the assembled out-siders were satisfied, yet the stock was not exhausted (*Jâtaka*, vol. i). The gospel writers did not like to be out-Heroded, the only difference is that they turned allegories into actual events.

possess magical powers : "He took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them." The four acts are natural and obvious, any one presiding at the table must do it. Why are they then mentioned afresh every time? "Such a characteristic repetition becomes more intelligible when," observes Van Eysinga, "we regard it as a liturgical formula, regularly used in a particular ritual" (*Radical Views*, p. 103). In this its magical property consists. In the *Purva mimánsá* the right recital of the *mantra* in its ceremonial order is the one thing needful. This is really a grand allegory of Creation descending from the hoary past. *Madhukaitava* as the *logos* springing from the body of Vishnu gave himself up for the creation of the Earth. In both the cases it is the theory of *emanation* that is resorted to for the explanation of the creation from One Immutable Being. In the Christian scheme the breaking of the body is the act of the blessed Lord. It symbolised the Life and Passion of Christ. And as in the religious consciousness of antiquity there is no hard and fast line of demarkation between symbol and reality, there is no difficulty to think of the bread transformed into the flesh of the god's body by virtue of the magical formula. The heavenly Christ puts on this body like a garment. He is destined to die (*Rom.* 8^{31-32}) i.e. break his body (*Passion and death*) for the good of those who partaking of it become one with him as members of the new body (*1 Cor.* 12^{27}) of which he is the head. "Thus he breaks his body for them in order that hereafter they, having partaken of him may be his body (*1 Cor.* 12^{12}ff, *Rom.* 12^{5}), the mystical body of the Lord" (*R. V.* 104). Here another set of metaphor is introduced. However, we find in *Mark* 6^{40}: "And they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties." This shows that it was a matter of a set formula and must have been taken from some earlier pictorial source. It is a notorious fact that the magical and mystical element predominated in the early Christianity. Vide *Early Christianity* by S. B. Black.

Another point is the connection of bread and wine in the Communion. The reading in Codex D of Luke's Supper there is no mention of wine. So is the case with the miraculous feeding. Paul's account also, though a very late interpolation (*1 Cor.* 11^{23}ff.) does not refer to wine. In Paul's advice to Timothy to drink wine, the authority of the saying or doing of Jesus is not cited. This is an indication that the two elements of the communion come from different sources (R. V. 102). We have already indicated that wine comes from Dionysiac mysteries. The body being "vine", the blood, of necessity, becomes wine. Here it is a palpable myth—a vegetable myth to boot.

As a miracle the fig-tree incident has been the despair of all Christian apologists, damaging as it is to the character even of an ordinary man, what of a Messiah ! But it is not a new phenomenon in the Jewish literature.

Christ's curse and Buddha's blessing.

The parrallel of the curse is found in the Talmud: "If he looked at a cocoanut tree, it died ; if he glanced at a breadfruit, it withered away". The gospel writers did not allow their Son of God to be outdone by an ordinary Rabbi, even if it be about the malicious eye (Carpenter's F. Th. Gos., p. 178f.n). It goes without saying that we do not expect its parallel in the Buddhist stories. But curiously enough an opposite miracle is related therein, and therefore no apology would be required. At the birth of the Buddha the dried up trees and flowers burst into life indicating that the sage would scatter life and light and love all around (Vide Beal's *Romantic History of Buddha*, p. 46). However, on the very face of it the episode is an allegory which the evangelists misunderstood, and introduced in their fiction as an actual historical event. It, as suggested by Dr. Carpenter, "describes Israel's unworthiness to receive the kingdom, it does nothing but cumber the ground. If it cannot show itself fit, it must perish" (the work cited, p. 177). This is also Dr. Smith's suggestion.

The parallel of the Prodigal Son is found in Buddha's Lost Son, where the son, in spite of his attempt to escape, is captured by the father and gradually led to salvation.

Prodigal son Buddhistic.

The father's graciousness and the son's depravity are found here more vividly pourtrayed. And the mode of reclamation is far more scientific in the latter. The father's riches and son's poverty form the central theme in both. And the son's request to the father, as we find it in *Luke* (xv), to make a servant of him is seen actually carried into effect in the Lost Son. (*The Gospel of Buddha* by Paul Carus). See also McCabe's *S. M. G.*, p. 199. Friedlander in his essay, "The Grace of God", has shown that the parable has been derived from Philo, and "Philo has been a valuable mine whence the writers of the New Testament have drawn", says he, "some of their best treasure. The Logos idea, the parable of the Prodigal Son, the gift of tongues (associated with the Pentecost), as well as Barabbas, have all been derived from Philo" (*The Jewish Sources* p. xii).

The Good Samaritan is said to have its origin in Buddhism, the influence of which over Christianity is an acknowledged fact. Its substance will be found also in *Deut* 23[7], where the story may be said to have been fairly forestalled in the abstract. Dr. Abrahams discusses the question from different standpoints, and shows that it was a com-

Nothing new in the Good Samaritan story.

mon practice with the Rabbis to hold up, even an idolator, as an example to follow in such a sacred matter as filial piety (P. G., 2nd S., pp. 32-40). But who is who's neighbour? The wounded man is the Samaritan's neighbour, that is the answer. Indeed, Jesus' conclusion is quite in keeping with his low ethics of commercial transaction ? Why should I love any one unless I have a chance of driving a bargain from him ? In view of the parable being a documentary patch, an insertion without content, and considering the gospel view of Jesus' attitude towards the Samaritans, it is almost sure, some Gentile or enlightened Jew interpolated it much later when the gospel crossed the Jewish boundary. This view has been elaborately argued by Mr. Montefiore in his *Commentary upon the Synoptic Gospels.* But in the *Teaching of Jesus* he briefly states " that the famous good Samaritan of the parable is rather due to the inspiration of the editor than to his master's" (p. 146). "Even more to the point are the stories told in the Midrash. Bar Qappara walking by the shore of the lake at Caesarea comes to the help of a Roman officer who had lost his all in the wreck of his vessel. Then there is the incident of Eleazar ben Shammua. Though he was a pupil of Aqiba who suffered martyrdom at the hands of Rome, Eleazar ben Shammua included Romans in his wide embracing benevolence. The Rabbi succours a shipwrecked Roman, clothes the sufferer in his own robe of honour, takes him home, feeds him and presents him with 200 demarii, and on his departure accompanies him part of the way." (I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, Second Series, pp. 39-40). These are not parables but real incidents in the ordinary life of the much maligned Pharisee. The reason is not far to seek why the parable came handy to the gospel-writer. It is a legacy of Judaism and not an example set by Christianity. However, taking up the gauntlet thrown down by Dr. J. E. Carpenter to " take the Good Samaritan, and from Plato to Plotinus find his match " (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 392*f.n*), Mr. Robertson has shown (C. M. p. 428, and also H. J.) from Plutarch's tale of Lycurgus and Alcander that there was in pre-Jesuine pagan world a better Samaritan than the one the Christian theologians are so fond of advertising, and that for no other reason than their being brought up in the dim light of the Christian tradition. So darkness has taken the place of light. It is time the Christians came out of their self-immurement, or it would prove their self-immolation. But no man need be in darkness as there is light on all sides and the lurid light of Christianity could no longer be hidden under a bushel even if you desired it. But how fast the light spreads! Bishop Colenso of Natal was excommunicated for the supreme crime of holding

the "scandalous opinion" (*Life*, p. 290) that Moses did not write the *Pentateuch*, though at present any tyro in the field should know that Moses is a fiction. It is in consequence of this, the Clergyman of today is not so shackled by the power of darkness. He now comparatively safely throws the gospels to the four winds. Observes the Rev. K. C. Anderson D. D., in the *Hibbert Journal*: "As a result of the work of the Higher Criticism the Four Gospels are a complete wreck as historical records. It is long since the Fourth Gospel was relegated to the realm of spiritual imagination....... It is regarded as......the story of his (the master's) life told in the light of philosophy of Alexandria......It is a pure assumption to suppose that there was any such neucleus of fact [as is claimed by some]; a more reasonable assumption would be that the author *deliberately adopted the biographical form to* set forth his message.... The same is substantially true of the Synoptics. How little they tell us of an historical Jesus ! And that little full of contradictions and discrepancies, of impossible incidents and errors" (1911, p. 346-347). Yes, if by their desperate efforts they could not tell us of an historic Jesus, it is simply because an historic Jesus did not exist.

Biblical accounts not historical.

Now taking into consideration what has already been said on the subject, no one except those who are hypnotised by the theological bias and prejudice by which most men are more or less affected, would feel bound to accept the Christian verdict that the parables could not be invented, or they carried with them the guarantee to establish the authorship of the gospel Jesus.

Not borrowed by the Talmud.

One very important issue must be raised and settled before we give up the subject. We have seen that most of the parables are traced to Jewish sources. The consensus of opinions veers round the hypothesis that Jesus is made to adopt and remodel them as they serve his purpose best. On the other hand, dissentients are there who try to turn the table against the Jews. They would make the Jews borrowers. But there is a psychological difficulty to meet. The proverbial Jewish fanaticism is in the way. Therefore such an orthodox commentator as Archbishop Trench disposes of this view by pointing out that "the hatred and scorn with which the Jews regarded all foreign literature, and most of all, the sacred books of the Christians makes this last supposition extremely improbable." *(Notes on the Parables*, p. 55). As two extremes meet, Mr. Robertson also holds exactly the same view. "Modern scholarship in general is able to recognise, as

did Christian scholars in the seventeenth century that," says the author of *Christianity and Mythology*, "no Rabbi of the early centuries would have dreamt of giving a friendly reception and currency to an extract from the Christian gospels " (p. 415).

CHAPTER VI.

Gospel Miracles.

At the very outset I offer an apology for discussing a subject which in the scientific mind of the present generation rouses a contemptuous smile only. We shall see afterwards that the subject has actually been relegated to the limbo of the 18th century pieties! But it is to be noted with regret that at the beginning of the 19th century Raja Rammohan Roy was severely taken to task because he excluded miracles as such from his scope of study in order to evaluate the truth of Christianity. So it behoves us to devote a few pages to this otherwise obsolete subject. One should at least feel some historical interest in it.

Reason for discussion.

Dr. Rashdall is a philosopher mortally afraid to, in any way, wound the orthodox susceptibilities. Even such a cautious man writes: "The enormous experience which we have of the actual regularity of the laws of nature, and of the causes which in *certain states of human mind* lead to the belief in miracles, makes such an event in the highest degree improbable" (*Philosophy and Religion*, p. 158). These aforesaid *certain states of human mind*, in the absence of a proper designation may be called *feminine*, if I am so permitted without any offence. Of course, I use the term in the old sense. Without exploiting the unhistorical records of the gospels interpreted in any way you like, it can be shown historically that on the female virtue of credulity the foundation of Christianity was laid and its spread owed not a little to it. Says Mr. Draper: "The paganisation of religion was in no small degree accomplished by the influence of the females of the court of Constantinople. It soon manifested all the essential features of a true mythology and hero-worship. Helena, the empress mother superintended the building of the monumental churches ......The vast and even increasing crowd of converts from paganism who had become such from worldly considerations, still hankered after wonders like those in which their forefathers had from time immemorial believed, lent a ready ear to assertions which to more hesitating and better instructed minds would have seemed to carry imposture on their very face". Then the historian discribes, how, when the temple of Venus formerly erected near the Holy Sepulchre was pulled down, forthwith sprang to light three crosses from the cavern beneath, together with Pilate's inscription, the Saviour's cross being distinguished

Female virtue of miracle-mongering.

by a miracle. And the report of these historical(?) discoveries spread like wild fire and established the moral superiority over these *certain states of human mind* (*A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol. I, p. 309).

Miracles as such nobody believes or cares to believe in now-a-days. So Mathew Arnold committed no sin when he told us, "miracles do not happen". Whether they happened in the past can not be taken on trust from the gospels. The evidence of story-tellers who evidently base their so-called history on dreams and visions goes out of consideration altogether.

But there are different methods in giving expression to our belief or disbelief. "Though we no longer prominently urge the miracles of Christ as the proofs of our religion, yet, on the other hand," maintains Dean Farrar in his *Life of Christ*, "we cannot regard them as stumbling blocks in the path of an historical belief" (p. xiii). Here we find both belief and disbelief rolled into one and a theologian's clever manœuvre to evade an intricate issue. A visible *vicious circle* is writ large across the dean's remark. After having nourished "our religion" by means of "the miracles" these two milleniums, it is all very well now to come to see that no sustenance from them is necessary for the preservation of that very religion. It is not for nothing that Strauss had to observe: "In theology a standard prevails totally different from that of simple truth." However, Weinel gives us the considered opinion of the age on the subject when he says: "We have seriously embraced the conviction that the notion of miracle can not be introduced any more into science nor into history." Harnack supports him: "That a storm was quieted by a word, we do not believe and shall never again believe." And they both represent the more conservative wing of the continental critics of the New Testament. In the ordinary sense of the term there is nothing supernatural in the world, but our ignorance makes things appear so. As a matter of fact what in one age seemed to be miracles are found in the next age, by the advancement of knowledge and enlightenment, to be natural phenomena as clear as daylight Is it not a fact that a blister can be raised in anybody today at any time by suggestion? Yet fifty years ago it would have been counted, as a clear violation of natural law and therefore a miracle. The Rope-tricks of Indian jugglers have not yet been explained. But they say and say truly that superstitions die hard, as there survive old women of all ages and both sexes in all lands and in all times. Now the question of questions arises. What do the miracles in their religious bearing prove, even if they are taken at their face

value ? Let us consider the rising of the dead, assumed to be the most stupendous of all miracles. What does it, at best, signify about the personality of him who performs such a wonderful deed? By-awaking a dead man he only shows that he possesses a power which others do not possess. But it does not prove that he possesses greater wisdom. The scientific discoverer is not necessarily a spiritual "guru" or Master. If he convinces me that I am pursuing a wrong path, I will amend; for I seek only the truth. But if all the dead in a body rise to-day to bear witness to his power, and yet, in his name reveals truths less high than what I know, then this power is no reason that I should accept them. "Whether the dead sleep or wake," Maeterlinck declares through the mouth of Appius in his *Mary Magdelene*, "I will not give them a thought unless they teach me to make a better use of my life." And it is an acknowledged fact that in the gospels we never find a truth in any way profounder than ancient masters taught. Now, there are 32 crores of people in India and by raising the dead you can add so many to the number of the famine-stricken. But, will they not remain as good or bad as before? Let us adjust everything with an even mind. It does not require a miracle to impress truths on the human mind. It is not difficult even for a child to discern that which augments or increases the love of virtue. There is a Doctor in our midst. He is Sir Jagadish who makes the plant write its obituary, which I, for one, hold to be more miraculous than raising the dead. Some prophets of old are said to have held commerce with animals, but plants actually speak to this Doctor, and he understands their language in a truer sense. The Doctor is a Bráhma, so he has got his peculiar religious convictions. But nobody claims that the world should be converted to Bráhmaism because of this extraordinary power over nature possessed by him. I want spiritual food to be fed with. If there be a man to feed me with what I require, miracles or no miracles, I bow down my head before him. Miracles have positively no room in the life of a spiritual teacher. The object of miracles is to make others virtuous by means of external force, as it were. This is irreligious! Christianity stands condemned from its own mouth before the bar of humanity as the disciples are said to have been fired with zeal not by the teachings of Jesus, but by a miracle, viz., the resurrection.

Religious significance of miracles.

As to gospel miracles, there are many schools of non-miraculous interpretion, as the supernatural is voted out of court in this scientific age. But they forget one cardinal point. Miracles were attributed to Jesus in order to prove his Godhead. To explain them away in any

other way is to cut the ground away from under the Christian's feet. Harnack contended that as our knowledge of psychic possibilities was not complete, we would not be justified in rejecting the stories of the deaf hearing and the blind seeing at the word of Jesus. True, but God is one, and many are credited with these psychic performances. Should all of them be considered so many Gods ? This knotty question was raised as early as the end of the 18th Century by the French scholar Dupuis in his *L'Origine* : "If we were to adopt that rule of criticism, we might urge against Christians that the faith of any people in the miracles and oracles of its religion proved its truth" ; but this the Christians are reluctant to admit. Rájarshi Rámmohan also has elaborately dealt with the subject and shown by a reference to the Hindu, Jein and Mahomedan literatures that the latter would claim greater divinity. There are related "miracles infinitely more wonderful" (pp. 555, 615 etc.). Modern spiritism and psychical research, though without the carefulness and exactness demanded in such investigations, have been forced into the theologian's service. But the theologian, in his ardour to catch at this drowning man's straw, forgets that such an attitude towards these gospel narratives ignores their miraculous character altogether. By the way it may be remarked that the question is not whether these events were possible according to natural laws which are still imperfectly known to us, but whether the truth of the events as related in the gospels is supported by any historical evidence. Verily, any independent historical evidence is not forthcoming, that of the evengelists is the most unreliable guide being not only mutually, but also self, contradictory. Strauss very early pointed out "that no single gospel, nor all the gospels together can claim that degree of historical reliability which would be required in order to make us debase our reason to the point of believing miracles." If by occultism and *Yoga S'ástra* all the objections against the so-called miracles are removed, nothing is gained for their historicity. It is bad logic to take the *possible* to be *actual*. But I forget, the thelogian cherishes a supreme disregard for logic. Nothing very strange in it. Here the theologian is an interested party adjudicating his own case, and to every one his own stability is his first concern. This is a biological truth. However, everything in a romance, say *Durges'anandini*, is possible, nay, probable. But that does not make it the actual biography of Jagat Singh, nor does it make Jagat Singh an historical person? When we go to interpret the Bible, we must bear in mind that it belongs to what is called sacred literature and must therefore take into consideration the peculiar

Miracles explained away.

character of this group of writings the devout object of which is not to satisfy the historian, but, according to the most 'historical' of evangelists, "to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us," *i. e.*, believers in the revelation about a God or Son of God (*Luke* 1[1]). "It is not to be denied", observes Whittaker in his *Origins of Christianity*, "that real personages or events may come into a sacred story, but its concern is not with them, but with doctrine or edification." (pp. xvi-xvii). Both the priest and the prophet are pragmatic. For our religious purpose as such we are quite unconcerned whether Dhruba's exile and Prahlád's torture are real events, so long as both can be turned into edifying accounts. This is the right view to adopt about the sacred literature in order to differentiate it from the profane. But theologians, at least some of them, have not shown any adequate regard for this important fact, so that they have landed themselves on hopeless absurdities. On the other hand, if these views have succeeded in doing anything, they have succeeded only in weakening the import of the account as intended by the gospel-makers. They make Jesus not unnatural or supernatural as the texts lead us to think the orthodox would have us believe but only endowed with more natural powers for the time being. Men have acquired greater powers since.

Psychically explained.

Even to a careless reader it is evident that Jesus was much occupied in healing the sick of diverse descriptions. As these healings were not accomplished by ordinary methods, the theories of auto-suggestion and hypnotic influence have been resorted to by some theologians, of whom J. Weiss is the protagonist. He thinks, for example, that in the delivery of the possessed at Capernaum by what may be taken as Jesus's hypnotic spell over the patient, there was nothing improbable. Concerning the healing of Peter's mother-in-law with a touch, he avers: "I do not see that what is described here is impossible" and then makes the confession: "I have no experience in such matters," evoking the humorous retort from Drews: "What a pity! what a lot he might have taught us had he been able to experiment on his own mother-in-law" (*Witnesses*, p. 137). Letting alone the case of mothers-in-law to be settled between these *Pundits*—pundits in all lands are allowed to indulge in such repartees—what concerns us most is the character of the science these theologians are building up, a science where every possibility or probability is foisted on the world as an actuality; we, of course, for the time being waive our claim to discuss threadbare the possibility or otherwise of curing such a patient by suggestive influence. On the other hand,

Strauss believes that Jesus might have effected some cures by perfectly natural means which the people owing to their gross ignorance and dark superstition considered to be miracles.

Next comes the interpretation of what is called the Natural school. Take for instance, Jesus's walking on the sea. Some one has suggested that Jesus hid a plank under his feet, thereby playing a hoax on his followers (R. V. p. 22). This method of interpretation, adopted in connection with the raising of Lazarus from the dead, had, early reached its climax with Renan, reckoned with Strauss Keim and Hausrath as "the four modern Evangelists." It was to Renan a clear case of forgery, to say the least of it. In his opinion it came to pass in the following way. In those days people cared very little for the law of Nature. In miracles they believed and the performance of a miracle was the passport to divine authority. And what miracle would weigh with them more than the raising of the dead.* Disgusted at the slow progress the kingdom of God made, the friends of Jesus, in order to placate the waverers by captivating their imagination by a miracle and to accelerate thereby the pace of the kingdom, made this plan. They, in his absence, put Lazarus in the tomb and when Jesus called him, he came out. How is it that Jesus allowed himself to be entangled in such a dirty business? Why, Renan opines: "Not by any fault of his own, by that of others his conscience had lost something of its original purity" (*Life of Jesus*). And yet according to Renan, Jesus was the most perfect of men! Had the compiler of the gospel had the faintest idea as to how this miracle would fare in the hands of the modern evangelist he would have rather hanged himself than incorporated it into his narrative. If you go to historicise an allegory or myth, such absurdities are inevitable. However, against the natural school it can be very cogently urged that "if Christ did not believe in, and believe that he could expel, unclean spirits, heal the blind and ailing, multiply loaves, and raise the dead, four-fifths of the gospel narrative is utterly meaningless" (McCabe's *Sources*, p. 19).

Naturally.

The theory of allegory, rather symbol *cum* allegory, has been reduced to a fine art, among others, by Prof. W. B. Smith in *Ecce Deus*, and Hermann Raschke in *Die Werkstatt*. Dr. Smith proves that the gospel narrative is the story, not of a man but of a god, on the lines of our Pauranic legends. We find no knowledge of such a human life as that which both modern liberal and orthodox theologians make the basis of their New Testament theory. "We do indeed," argues Prof. Smith, "find a few scant allusions to certain

Symbolically.

* This was already related of Asclepios and Apollonius also.

dogmas that were "confessed," but those are all of a more or less metemperical nature" (p. 55). Practically he has relieved the Biblical demonology * of its hideous character. It is to be noted that miracle stories have two aspects—the basic idea and the details of the picture. Smith is occupied more with the former and Raschke with the latter aspect thereby, though independently, supplemented Smith who started the game. We cite only just one example of his method of interpretation. Take the story of the Gadarene Swine (*Mark* 5[1]). Jesus here stands for Monotheism. Spiritually a polytheist is considered as good as dead. So the man comes out of the tomb and worshipping Jesus becomes a monothiest, a being of a superior order– a Jew in the real sense of the term, *i.e.*, a worshipper of the true God. The following is a fair sample how Raschke works out the details. Why does the man come out of the *tomb*? Because the region in which the event is located means the *land of caves*. Why *fettered*? The district is Dekapolis and the Aramaic root consonant for it is the same as to bind, *fetter*. Where do we find the *herd of swine* from. Why, the place is called not only Gerasa but Gadara, and *gadhra* means *the herd* (vide the *Literary Guide*, May 1926.) The symbol may thus be further elaborated. The tomb may be made to stand for the darkness in which the polythiest's life is enshrouded. The demon whose name is Legion represents the innumerable gods and goddesses a polytheist worships. They are now driven into the swine, meaning the polytheistic Gentiles who are destined ultimately to be destroyed. The epithet signifies the contempt in which polytheism was held. However, this is an allegory about the spread of gospel theism which, according to Smith, is of some importance. Such an unmitigated libel against the whole Gentile world with the heathen government still strong at Rome could not possibly in plain language be indited with impunity by a cleric. So the

* One reason for such an interpretation is this: The idea is said to occur in *Matthew* about twenty three times, in *Mark* twenty-eight, in *Luke* thirty-three, in *John* seven, in *Acts* seven. "There is something that calls for explanation. The cases of possession and of exorcism in Galilee have been countless; in Judæa there are none at all. Can it be that epileptic lunacy and nervous disorders prevailed so amazingly in Galilee, but found no material in Judæa? Certainly not, for it is an ethnological fact that the Jews are specially subject to such distempers, though otherwise uncommonly vigorous and healthy. There is one and one explanation of this curious evangelic distinction between these two adjoining regions: the maladies in question were spiritual maladies that afflicted whole multitudes in Galilee of the Gentiles, but not the Jews in Judæa; they were the maladies of false religion, of demon-worship, of Paganism" (E. D., pp. 211-212).

trick. The symbolical character of this miracle has been elaborately drawn out by Dr. Carpenter (F. TH. Gos , p. 168). He contends that it contains an allusion to the victory of Christianity over paganism, and it is significant that it is said to have been performed beyond the Jewish soil. And this is not an isolated fact. He rightly observes : "This process was no doubt promoted by the tendency to convert symbols into actual incidents and turn figure into facts" (Ibid p. 172).

Then the spiritual school. This school could fairly take advantage of Jesus' stout refusal in one place to perform any miracle whatsoever in the accepted sense of the term. Jesus opened the eyes and ears of the blind and the deaf. There is an Old Testament motive here. It has been inspired by the following passage: "Behold, your God.........will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (*Isaiah*, 35[4-5]). And almost all the miracles ascribed to Jesus are found already performed by Isaiah's Servant of God. For an exhaustive information on how the Old Testament *predictions* inspired the writing of a life of the New Testament Messiah one should refer to David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, both the editions of 1835 and 1864, each in two big volumes. However *opening the eyes* should be taken not in the physical but in a spiritual sense. Formerly this view was advocated by Lublinski. The symbolical character of the gospel narrative, at least in part, did not fail to strike Origen who, in the same degree with Justin Martyr, was the most philosophical and keensighted of early Fathers. But its most thorough-going champion is Paul W. Schmiedel who has written many treatises in support of the historicity of Jesus with this open declaration that if the historicity be disproved his "inmost religious convictions will not be affected." The nature of the method of interpretation he has adopted clearly indicates that much. Mr. Loisy also belongs to this school and his compendious book *Synoptiques* is said to have epitomised and supplanted libraries.

Spiritually.

In conclusion, we present the reader with a passage which may be taken to be the last word on the subject. Mr. S. B. Black introduces his translation of Van Eysinga's *Radical Views about the New Testament* in the following terms : "The question of miracles has long since receded into the background. It belongs rather to the 18th century. The problems which criticism has to face leave the miraculous, as a rule, out of consideration". Unfortunately the 18th century is not yet two centuries old everywhere and for all men !

CHAPTER VII.

Jesus and Paul.

The common sense view based on the literal interpretation of the New Testament is: Paul never saw Jesus, (how did he then recognise him when he saw him in a vision or heard him ?) nor did he come into close contact with any of his companions or those who were supposed to have seen him, earlier than he had preached for some time (*Acts* 20^{31} and 24^{17}) his Messiah the idea of whom he formulated to himself and whom everybody was expecting any moment throughout the Mediterranean coast. And the pupil of Gamaliel well versed in the Greek lore, as Paul is assumed to have been, had no difficulty in giving flesh and blood to his fancied God. In the Old Testament we find the promised Messiah, *Isaiah's* "Servant of God," not as a prediction only. In the *Didachê* (*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*), we find, "Jesus, thy Servant." So also in *Acts* 3^{13}, 3^{26}; 4^{27}, 4^{30}. The fertile Hebrew imagination was good enough to manufacture all the details of his life and doings. And actual Messiahs are not wanting in the Old Testament. Vide *infra* Chap. XVIIIa. It is not in human nature to give up the *idea* already formed of a thing for the *thing*, perchance one stands face to face with the latter after in life. Thousands have worked themselves up to the belief that Mahátmá Gándhi is an incarnation and, it is found, incarceration ill fits in with the idea. Go and argue and you find it impossible to convince them that the Mahátmá has been already imprisoned. Those who can not avoid the conclusion have come to a compromise: "Yes, but as soon as he is taken in by one gate, he goes out by another. How can he be confined in one place? He is to spend some months in Dwárká, some months in Brindában and the rest of the year in travelling!" This is, of course,

How myths are made.

Sreekrishna side. But all are not Krishna worshippers. Therefore others have given the Mahátmá a role of Sreeram too. So a *Hanumán* has also been discovered. Add to this the Gándhi pujá with its peculiar *láddus* introduced by our Maries and Marthas of Northern India. When all these are combined with innumerable fables including miraculous healing and its opposite, the miraculous killing heartily believed in and vigorously defended not by the masses only, some discrepancies will necessarily crop up which the gospellers never care for. Interpreters are never wanting in their devices to explain them away. Seek and you will find hundreds

of such stories in the country which the *Messiah* still in flesh strives in vain to repudiate *—the Messiah, whose kingdom to some has already come, which, to fulfil the repetition of history, others reject. It is no wonder then that Rabbi Paul would go on vociferously preaching his Messiah in spite of the quite different message the disciples are said to have pressed upon him. There is nothing surprising in it that the leader of the latter party would send emissaries to still that voice. The orthodox view is: as soon as Paul was converted he began to preach without the necessary apprenticeship through which, to qualify himself, a neophyte must pass. And in the case of the Saul of Tarsus it was especially needed, as he was neither a disciple of Jesus, nor had he any idea of the nature of the message, if any, the Master himself gave to the world. On the contrary, what according to modern critical theology constitues the greatness and peculiarity of the gospel of Jesus—his trust in the fatherly goodness of God, love of neighbour and fulfilment of the law, emphasis on meekness and mercy, warning against too much desire of earthly goods—all these are conspicuous in Paul by their absence. There is little trace in Paulinism of the earthly career of Jesus with its many-sided activities as narrated in the gospels. In doctrinal quarrels, of which there is plenty, no teaching of Jesus has ever been cited, no distinctive acts of Jesus were appealed to, nor any sayings in the gospels as such quoted which he might have done with advantage to strengthen his own views and deductions. There can be no better proof that Paul knew nothing of Jesus. Drews observes: 'We should like to have it explained how a man who has the authority of "the Lord" on his side in a heated conflict with his opponents (on the question of the law, for instance), and for whom the mere mention of it would suffice to silence his opponents, instead of doing so, uses the most complicated arguments from the Scriptures [Old Testament] and the most determined dialect c, when he might have acted so much more simply. Why, for instance (*Gal.* iii. 31, does he not recall that Jesus has also discussed the Jewish laws about food, in order to convince Peter that he is wrong in avoiding the tables of the Gentiles? Why does he not mention that the Jews crucified

Paul ignorant of Gospel Jesus.

* It is said of Rámkrishna Paramahansa that when he was suffering from an incurable disease, an obdurate disciple insisted on his declaring himself as the *avatar* of Vishnu. The devout man turned the physician present and said: Doctor, see the fun of it, I die of cancer, but the fellow would have me proclaimed as the incarnation of the Deity.

Jesus on the Passover, the chief solemnity, and had thus themselves shown that the law was not absolutely valid? If he knew of an historical Jesus, it remains the most insoluble of problems why he made no use of the knowledge" (*Witnesses*, pp. 100-101). Some have argued that Paul dealt with Jesus elaborately in his oral discourses, therefore he did not return to the subject in his letters. No comment is necessary. The standpoint is too ludicrous to need any detailed refutation. There are two letters to Bishop Timothy, thereby proving that the Bishop was an important personage of the early church. But neither Paul nor Timothy is found to be aware of the last Supper and of Jesus' fondness for wine. Because Paul is inducing the Bishop to the "fruit of the vine" on the utilitarian grounds: "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (1 *Tim* 5[23]). Was Timothy, then, a Bauddha or Essene that he would need persuasion to take wine for health? Yet the Paul of the Epistles is presented to us as a contemporary of Jesus. This contemporary had deified one who sacrificed himself for humanity, and that when those who saw him, sat at the same table and sailed in the sea of Galilee with him were still living. To Schopenhauer this appeared, as early as in 1851, to afford an argument for the spuriousness of the Pauline writings "as in all other cases every genuine deification of the same character and extent has required a period of several centuries in order to bring it to maturity" (*Parerga und Paralipomena*). And considering the circumstances of the case, Schopenhauer must be taken as right. One may contend that it is not unoften that a man is deified in his life time, but Couchoud effectively knocks the bottom out of the contention by remarking: "In many a province of the Empire the deification of an individual was practicable. But in one nation at least *such things were impossible*: that nation was the Jewish." (*The Enigma of Jesus*, p. 85.) The Italics are ours. "If the letters were written a century later", comments Van Eysinga in R. V. pp. 101-102, "than the time when Jesus lived, then his deification in the Pauline letters ceases to be so astonishing." And evidences bear Eysinga out. Justin Martyr,* a kindred spirit of Paul living in 140 A. D. does not mention Paul. That is suspicious enough. But he goes directly against certain doctrines of the Epistles. How can he put himself in direct opposition to tenets inculcated a

* "When Justin Martyr alludes to any written documents used by the Church, he speaks of "Memoirs" or "Gospels", never of any letters written by Apostles," *Radical Views*, p. 78. So, "there is no proof of the existence of Pauline Epistles before Justin", *Witnesses* p. 103. On the other hand, in as early as the second century the Severians, an heretical sect declared the Epistles of Paul to be spurious.

century ago by an Apostle? This shows that the Pauline letters could not be much earlier than Justin Martyr, or they were not yet canonised. It is contended from concordances—mere concordances but no quotations as such—of certain utterances in the epistles with the gospels that Paul knew Jesus. Without independent establishment of the priority of the latter the argument has no leg to stand upon. It is not inconceivable that the words of the epistles were afterwards utilised in the gospel narrative. Most likely both of them drew upon a common source. It is absolutely no logic to try to prove the historical character of the gospels by referring to the epistles and then base the historicity of the Pauline references to Jesus by means of the gospels supposed to have been written after the epistles (*Witnesses*, p. 93). And there is no direct and unequivocal reference by Paul to "the words of the Lord." By the way it may be remarked that the author of the Epistles is not an authority on the Old Testament either. "Paul is the very last person who," moans R. Travers Herford "ought to be relied on as a witness to the nature of Pharisaism" (*The Pharisees*, p. 165). It would be simply blasphemous to say so of the famous disciple of Gamaliel. All the same this is the deliberate verdict of an eminent Hebrew scholar about the Paul of the Epistles. And Paul never quoted except from the Septuagint only. What it implies is patent, i. e., the author of the Epistles can not be of Hebrew origin. But the shackles of tradition prevents Herford and the scholars of his mode of thinking from proceeding to that logical conclusion. However, does it not strike more than strange that a contemporary writer would be so indifferent to the words and deeds of the object of his veneration which the tradition could have supplied him in abundance, that he intentionally confined himself to the death and resurrection of the glorified Christ, the Son of God? This strangeness strikes the imagination not only of the modern critics but it failed not to impress the mind of the author of the *Acts* also. What was wanting in fact could only be made up for by a stroke of genius—the invention of the legend of Paul's miraculous conversion. This together with the story of his part in the persecution of the Christians was invented to do duty as a proof that Paul was acquainted with Jesus as a historical personality, and Jesus had a profound influence on him. Otherwise how could he recognise Jesus when he saw him in a vision* on his way to Damascus? But this, by trying to

* It will not be uninteresting in this connection to know what Psycho-analysts have to say on such visions, real or imaginary, as they have analysed characters in fictions also: Paul is the victim of hysterical hallucinations. He has been termed an epileptic. As he proceeds upon the road to Damascus, there is a sudden welling-

prove too much, has proved too little. This supernatural occurrence with all other miracles must be hushed into silence, W. R. Cassels in his *Supernatural Religion* having finally given a quietus to the question for all rational beings. The legend was fabricated for another reason also. Paul was a Pharisee and is therefore supposed to have been acquainted with a form of the mission of the Messiah on earth It is to be noted that the Old Testament Messiah, in most cases, was the persecuted Jewish nation itself, dead to the world for all practical purposes but expected to rise again to occupy its high position and fulfil its mission by bringing about the salvation of the world. Allegories are the very backbone of all ancient writings. We, the persecuted Hindus, not counted among the living, expect to rise again to deliver a message without which, we trust, universal humanity would remain imperfect. And we have persuaded ourselves to believe that the day is not far off—a spontaneous dream of all crushed peoples. However, Paul persecuted the Christians because the latter identified Jesus with the Messiah. As soon as he was convinced of the fact through his vision, he began to preach Christianity in his own way. But the internal evidence shows as for example the Epistle to the Galatians, that the doctrines preached therein could not be found in the Church except by the middle of the second century. Here we find a highly abstruse and metaphysical doctrine. In the first century philosophy did not come into existence, and the Church of Galatia was composed of low class illiterate people. Paul preaching to the Galatians in the first century is Hegel lecturing to the Aborigenes of Africa. But the Christianity of Paul is in direct conflict with the form in which the apostles preached it. Paul preached no gospel Christianity. His philosophical doctrines could be adapted to the needs of the Churches and be assimilated by them far later in their evolution. For Paul wrote originally for developed Gnostic sectaries. The epistles indicate that the churches had long been established and the ecclesiastical organisation was in an advanced stage with all its doctrinal developments and dissensions too. The question of exclusion from communion was already raised. How could there be catechumens without catechisms? (*Gal.*6[6]). Here

Paul's conversion a myth.

up of repressed emotion; there is vision, a bright light and a voice (visual and auditory hallucinations). This is coincident with a "falling" and immediately followed by hysterical blindness. (Swisher's *Religion and the New Psychology*). About *Anxiety-neurosis*, see Pfister's *Psycho-Analytic Method*. And about *Hysteric Blindness*, consult Pfister and also Coriat's *Abnormal Psychology* and Lay's *nconscious Conflict*.

the apostle of the Gentiles, called also the apostle of the heretics, stands before us as an original and independent preacher with his pronounced universalistic outlook and antinomian tendencies clearly outlined, but in the *Acts* he is a Law-observing Jew and Pharisee.

Cannot Paul then be taken as a reformer of Christianity ? Yes, in that case we are confronted by a psychological miracle, pure and simple. Then miracle and a psychological miracle to boot must be accepted as historically true ! Here is the strange phenomenon of a man accepting through vision a religion which he, just a moment ago, was persecuting. But now, instead of advocating it with the zeal of the first convert, as is usual, he forthwith begins to reform what he is scarcely acquainted with. "It is simply inconceivable", Van Manen observes, "that Paul the Jew, who persecuted the community on conviction, brought about so extraordinary a revolution in the faith of this community almost immediately after he accepted it (cp. *Paul*, E. Bib. §40, also R. V., p. 101 . Manen also shows, the thesis that Paul got his theology by slow development after his conversion is barred by circumstances. "There is no evidence of any such slow development", he asserts. It is the makeshift of exegetes who feel the difficulty but have not courage enough to acknowledge it. Paul's own confession given in *Galatians* reveals enough that the bigoted zealot of the Law but the persecutor of the infant Church at once comes forward, on his miraculous conversion, with what is new and great in his message and this, he averred, he received directly from God. This Gospel he calls his own gospel and delivers it with the emphasis—if any 'angel from heaven preaches contray to it, let him be 'accursed' *(Gal.* 1[8]) i. e. Jesus must be accursed as the theology of the gospels and the theology of the epistles are poles asunder. Psychologically too the position is untenable. Van Eysinga proposes a case. Say, a younger contemporary of Plato, a sophist in southern Italy, delights in opposing Socrates. But a new light springs up and he entirely identifies himself with the Master. What follows ? Instead of going to Athens where from Plato and others he could feel the very pulse of Socrates, he goes to Egypt and preaches about him three years before thinking of going to Athens. Shall we take him as an authority on Socrates ? Will not the whole account be rejected as a canard being a psychological enigma ? Viewed in this light Paul's story seems extremely unnatural. A younger contemporary of Jesus, as Paul is supposed to be, was delighted to persecute his disciples. But a new light was suddenly revealed which impelled him to entirely identify himself with the cause of him of whom he had no first hand knowledge, nor even a second hand information. What is most natural under such circums-

tances ? An actual Paul must have the desire to acquaint himself with how the Master thought, felt and taught. And in order to accomplish this most effectively he would forthwith proceed to the scene of his life and activity, where Peter and other companions of Jesus were still living and preaching. But no, he remained where he was, writing, preaching and journeying far and wide to preach what he preached the rest of his life. Then after three years the idea occurred to him that he should visit Jerusalem !* This rubbish we have been accustomed to believe to be the most authentic history of the life and teachings of one who is said to have brought new light to the world. What was then Paul's Christianity as distinguished from that of the gospels ? We gather its gist from his so-called epistles.

Tradition no safe guide.

There are three distinct views about these Epistles. The orthodox would swallow them *en masse* tooth and nail all. And this is the way of the orthodox all the world over. The *Mahábhárata* has been brought to its present voluminous size by several changes which would require at least four hundred years. Never mind, the same *Vyasa* is the author in all its successive stages ; because there is nothing impossible for a *rishi* to live four hundred years. Much later the *Puranas* were written from different standpoints and to teach contradictory things during a thousand years. Their view-points, in some cases, are poles asunder. But, what of that, *Vedavyasa* must be the author of all of them. That the traditional view is not always the true interpretation of the ancient scriptures has been proved beyond all cavil by Lokamánya Tilak by successfully controverting Sáyana. Recently the traditions about Pratápáditya and Siráj-uddaula have been put to rout by historical researches. Though there are unmistakable internal evidences that the epistles were never written at the date traditionally affixed to them, their authorship must cling to one Paul, the contemporary of Jesus. We may here profitably consider a couple of passages from Paul to show how forcibly the traditional date of the Epistles is contradicted by internal evidence. Take *Gal.* 4 $^{24-26}$, where Paul disposes of the story of Abraham's two wives as allegorical. Here a reference is made to two Jerusalems. Of the real Jerusalem he speaks despisingly, "for she is in bondage with her children." But a hope is entertained of a new Jerusalem, "the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our mother". This can not be explained by the Jews' ordinary subjection to Rome.

* The Roman Catholic Professor., V. Weber of Wurzburg says : 'Paul went to Jerusalem in order to have his Gospel [not of Jesus] endorsed by the Apostles" (R. V., p. 114.)

It means the total abandonment of the old idea that Jerusalem is the centre of the kingdom to come. Whatever might be the degree of his political servitude,—the condition of India may here be cited as a parallel case,—with his Temple and its heirarchy intact, the Jew was ever wistfully looking forward for the realisation of that idea. So, such a disparaging remark could not be made before the fall of the Temple and the Dispersion of the Jews. The thought of the new Jerusalem was wholly impossible with the contemporary of Jesus. A triumphant Christian theocracy could not be dreamt of before the middle of the second century. In justification of this we may quote 1 *Thess.* 2^{14-16}. The tenacious Jew did not give up his hope without a final revolt which was suppressed by Hadrian in 135 A. D. Before that date, the idea that "the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" could not dawn upon any body's mind. In this connection Paul declares Jews to be "coutray to all men." But, by the first half of the first century, if there were any Christians they would be indistinguishable from the Jews. This opposition came into existence when the Christians sided with Rome against the Jews in their final national attempt to recover their freedom. Here came about the final separation between the two communities. How could that be before the middle of the second century ? Paul charges the Jews with "forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved." Did not Jesus himself forbid his apostles to go to the Gentiles ? *Matt.* 10^5. If Paul were a Jew, a contemporary of Jesus, as he is taken to be, he could not be other than a Jew he condemns. Whittaker has rightly remarked that "the original should be read to appreciate the absolutely unthinkable character of the whole passage in 54, the traditional date. Every clause indicates reminiscence, dramatically referred, in the month of the supposed apostalic author, to the present or the future" *(Origins of Christianity*, p. 45). However, the entire absence from the *Acts* of any mention of any public epistle by Paul proves their late origin or late incorporation. The matter dealt with in them and the mode of treatment show that the author can not be a Jew, at least, the Saul of Tarsus, the distinguished pupil of Gamaliel. The writer or writers of the Pauline letters—they are more doctrinal and philosophical treatises than personal letters—both think and speak in Greek. Pauline literature is thoroughly Alexandrian, permeated through and through with Greek philosophy. Paul in the *Romans* holds himself indebted both to "Greeks and Barbarians". Such a consciousness is wholly outlandish in Palestine, but quite at home in a cosmopolitan city like Alexandria. Paul's advice in the *Corinthians*

to uncover for men and to cover the head for women while praying is based on a Greek and Roman custom. Paul wrestles with Hebrew, but is quite conversant with Greek which he seems to have heard at home and learnt to write at school, so much so that necessarily he throughout refers to the Greek translation of the Old Testament. This is far from possible for a born Jew of the reputation of Saul's Hebrew scholarship. The author of the *Galatians* can not be a Jewish scribe—he uses the Septuagint translation instead of the original Hebrew text. "There is serious ground for reflection in the fact that," Dr. Drews is firmly of opinion, "as Kautzsch pointed out in 1869 and Steck has confirmed, the writer of the Epistles does not quote the Hebrew text of the Scriptures, but the Greek Septuagint translation, with all its faults and that on this account he makes statements which a glance at the Hebrew text would have shown him at once to be incorrect" (*Witnesses* pp. 117-118). No wonder that in his *Appeals* Rájarshi Rámmohan pointed out Paul's misquotations according to the Hebrew Bible. However, Paul rejects the bodily resurrection, but interprets it in a spiritual sense—this is not Jewish. The Jewish nation must rise bodily to rule the world. There is no trace of any profound knowledge of the scriptures as taught in the schools of the Jews, within or without Palestine. This is the opinion of modern Rabbinical scholar, J. Eschelbucher, whom the epistles remind of the Fate of classical antiquity than the God of the Old Testament Another Jewish authority, C. G. Montefiore, though convinced of their general authenticity, declares : "Either this man had never been a Rabbinical Jew, or else he has completely forgotten what Rabbinical Judaism was and is." (*Jewish Quarterly Review* for January, 1901). Yes, Paul's references to the Jews and Judaism carry with them the conviction that the writer occupies an outside position.* So then the orthodox view must go. Whoever, a Canon, a Dean or a Bishop, his vested interest notwithstanding, has made a critical study of the question, has, curiously enough, had to give up the orthodox position. Next comes the view of the Tubingen school of which F. C. V. Baur, the Dutch scholar (1792-1860) is the founder. According to him the *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, and *Galatians*, called 'Hauptbriefe' (Cardinal Epistles) were genuine, bearing "so unmistakably the stamp of Pauline originality" (R. V.) But Baur hallooed before he was out of the wood. It is

* The story goes, though not yet historically vouched for that Paul was a Greek. (Paul is a Greek name, Saul is Hebrew). He fell in love with a Jewess, the daughter of a priest, but when refused, turned a violent anti-Jew. This shows how difficult it is to decide about Paul's origin, confusing as it is in all conscience.

never safe to predict, as we have already seen from the *Galatians* and some others that there is very little to choose between one set of the epistles and the other. So in V. Baur's own time, the German scholar Bruno Bauer "setting out with the purpose of extracting a biography from the gospels and finding no standing ground' raised his banner of revolt against the school, and led the way to the third or Radical View showing the spuriousness of all the New Testament writings. The search-light of critical analysis of the last century has found out not a single document to have been written by the writer whose name it bears. "For the Paul of Epistles no less than the Paul of the *Acts*, the free play of the reflecting consciousness of the author is alone responsible". The two portraits are irreconcilable. And "our Gospels are the product of the creative fancy of the Evangelists" (*Radical Views*, p. 6). About the New Testament, this is the deliberate pronouncement of the Radical School before whose dissecting knife the canon has fallen to pieces. The most distinguished exponent and organiser of the radical views is the Dutch scholar, Professor van Manen, whom Thomas Whittaker, in the preface of his *Origins of Christianity*, has called "the Copernicus of New Testament criticism". Van Manen began as a conservative critic and was in search of the historical Jesus, about whom he had previously been much troubled. The Tubingen School drove him to despair in this respect. But he heaved a sigh of relief when by honest and thorough but critical study of the epistles he discovered the spuriousness of all of them. Because he was fully convinced that if the epistles of Paul were true the historicity of Jesus would be a dream. That is, it is a settled fact that the Paul of the epistles talks of a Christ who, if anything, can not be an historical person. But when similar tests are applied to the gospels the verdict of fabrication would be passed in their case too.

All New Testament writings spurious.

Gospels and Epistles conflicting.

Now, let us conclude with the weighty words of Robertson: "Historically considered, the epistles undermine the biographical theory whether we reckon them early or late, genuine or pseudepigraphic. If early, they discredit completely the notion of a historical Jesus of impressive personality. If as late as Van Manen makes them (120-140) they tell not only of indifference to the personality of Jesus but of ignorance of the gospel story as we have it, strongly suggesting that the complete story of the tragedy was yet unknown, and that only in still later interpolations, made before the Judas story was current, was it to be indicated" (J. P., p. 180). These interpolations we shall take up in the next chapter. In the meantime we

emphatically say that Paul knew no man-Jesus. "Man's Saviour is not historical, as St. Paul is never tired of reiterating. "The Christ," remarks the Rev. K. C. Anderson, D. D., "that saved him was the Son of God revealed in him. His great desire for his converts was that the Christ might be formed within them" (*Hibbert Journal* for January, 1911). And Paul says so in so many words in the *Galatians* 1[11-12] : "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not after *man*. For I neither received it of *man*, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." One word more. "Even at the time", says Dr. G. R. Gregory, "at which Paul wrote the first Epistle to the *Corinthians* [we need not specify the date] it is clear that no Gospels were known to him" (*New Testament*, p. 49). Two conclusions offer themselves from Paul's ignorance. And from both the cases it is deduced that the gospels were written after the Epistles and Paul knew nothing of the gospel Jesus. The traditional view is that Paul is Jesus' contemporary. Can not Paul be his predecessor? If Jesus were a historial person Paul's ignorance would be a demonstration to that fact. It is probably the case that a Paul wrote about the Christ (not about Jesus) from the Gnostic standpoint. According to Stock the epistles are anti-legal Gnostic productions. There was a pre-Christian Gnostic sect and they had a legend of Christ, a symbolic or astral Christ. And "it is beyond doubt," Harnack informs us, "that theologic literature had its origin among the Gnostics" (E. D., p. 12). Later on when the Gnostic sect was incorporated with the Christian community Paul's epistles were canonised. Paul did not know of Jesus because the gospels were written after him (vide *Witnesses*, p. 102). The early Fathers did not know Paul because the epistles were canonised much later, introducing certain interpolations. This is, in a way, admitted even by Van Manen : "Plainly Paul is not a contemporary but a figure of the past' (*Paul*, E. Bib., §40, iii). Van Manen's mistake lies in his taking Pauline *Gnosis* as post-Christian (*Romans*, E. B. §17). But Gnosticism is pre-Christian. Pfleiderer speaks of the "most ancient Gnostic sects which were in existence prior to Christianity" (*Primitive Christianity*, vol. iii, p. 115).

Corrigendum—Chap. vi, p. 132, l. 19 : *read* or *after* to think !

CHAPTER VIII.

Pauline Christianity.

"Paulinism was a form" reiterates Whittaker in his *Origins of Christianity*, "taken by an advancing movement of speculative theology among the Greek-speaking Christian converts in Syria and Asia Minor." (p. 29) We will now extract this theology from the epistles. Jesus came to fulfil the law. This was the creed with the first disciples and it was their greatest rallying point too. But the Paul of the epistles begins with breaking away from the Jewish law which was given to men by God for their good, enabling them to distinguish between right and wrong. But it proved a curse as much as it called into being the slumbering desire to oppose the commandments. It has deepened the slavery of evil and sin. God took pity on them, and in order to release them from the bondage of the law sent Christ, his "Son," originally a supernatural being buried in God but co-operating with him in creating the world—the "Son" who gave up the glory of heaven to take upon himself all the ills the flesh is heir to, even death on the cross, for the redemption of mortals which the law was powerless to accomplish. His was the sacrificial death in which the whole humanity died and in whose resurrection the whole humanity rose, bringing about its complete triumph over sin and death. So the Son is the "Saviour." By "faith" in the Son men will be saved. Not merit but "grace" is all in all. By being united with Christ they will be united with God from whom they fell by the fall of Adam. So Christ is the "mediator." Christ has delivered them from the power of "demon", so he is "deliverer". Put yourself in the intimate personal relation with him, accept the cross (crucify yourself with Christ), show this by the love of your fellowmen and you share Christ's. exaltation. This is the new gospel of "faith", the gospel of "spirit" contrasted with the "letter" of the law. Accept this and attain redemption. It is "the revelation of mystery which was kept secret since the world began (*Rom.* 16[25]). But what is this secret? There has been an alienation between God and the world of sense or unreason (the very breath of Gnosticism). God is opposed to the world as spirit to flesh. The world is ruled "by him who subjected it —neither God nor devil but a power analogous to Gnostic Demiurge*

Paulinism a spiritual symbol.

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* In this term, *Demiurge* or *Demiourgos* lies the explanation of the myth of Jesus the carpenter, or the son of carpenter. Origen knows no gospel "current in the

to be subdued by the Son." The "rulers of this world" who knew not what they did when they crucified the Lord of Glory "the wisdom of God in a mystery" (1 *Cor.* 2^{7-8}) were not Roman or Jewish authorities but supernatural powers, the "gods many and lords many," the "demons" (*Rom.* 8^{38}). To apply this to Jesus of Nazareth is absurd. Man's conflict is with the spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places* and not with "flesh and blood" (*Eph.* 6^{12}). To deliver man from the clutches of these powers the "Son" was made flesh. This is the whole story, but it is an allegory pure and simple. Really the Christ of whom Paul speaks is "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (*Hebrews*, 7^{3}). Paul never says that Christ became man and was a man, but "was made in the likeness of men being found in fashion as a man." This is the language of the Docetics who in the second century denied the humanity of Christ, and expressed not in the model of the Jesuists, but of the Gnostics. The whole scheme is a spiritual process symbolised in terms of flesh. Man has forgotten God and has become of earth earthy. This is the Christ made flesh. Freed from flesh and re-united to hie father in the transfigured form through obedience even unto death, the "Son" is a symbol for men how they breaking off from the chains of earthly desires would attain their true nature by sacrifice of their carnal personality (cf. Drews' *Witnesses*, p. 65 and Whittaker's *Origins of Christianity*, p. 39). Except in two or three passages detected to be clear forgeries (even often the originals, if any, passing through several redactions), there is no reference to any incident of the life of Jesus. Moreover, Adam and Christ are two ends of the spiritual scheme —one being meaningless without the other. If Christ were historical Adam should be so. "What a blunder," exclaims Dr. Anderson "to make both Fall and Redemption outward historical events and a Paradise lost and a Paradise regained, when they are both inward, spiritual facts, happening not once in the long course of history, but re-enacted in every human soul! But here is the point: it is not possible to make the Fall allegorical and the Redemption historical.

churches" (*Against Celsus*) in which Jesus is a carpenter. This is ostensively of late adaptation from Gonsticism. Some Gnostics derisively gave this name, meaning an artisan of any kind, to the Jewish God to subordinate him to the Supreme Being in their divine hierarchy. Being the son of that God, Jesus naturally became the son of an artisan, in this case, a carpenter. As a Jew to maintain his respectability he was to adopt a profession. That purpose was also served in this way (*Historical Jesus*, pp. 153-154). Our hackneyed phrase, "the carpenter theory of creation" is also partly explained in this way.

If one be spiritual so must the other be. If the "devil" who lured man to his "death" be the partial development within him of reason and intuition, the "Christ" who is to be his Saviour must be their full development' (*Hibbert Journal* of January, 1911). It would be a downright libel on the intellect of those who wrote the epistles—rather open letters—in Paul's name, to hold that they believed in an historical Adam when themselves living and moving in the atmosphere of Gnosticism. Schweitzer hits upon the truth when he says : "Greek, or to speak more precisely, Alexandrian, is the metaphysical background of his conception of Christ. According to Holtzmann, Paul never really goes back expressly to Daniel or the Apocalyptic Messiah. His own special view grew up, Holtzmann thinks, out of speculations allied to those of Philo about the two accounts of the creation and the heavenly and earthly Adam" (*Paul and his Interpreters*, p. 110). The Adam is as allegorical as the Christ is. "Like all gnosis," says Mr. Whittaker (*Origins of Christianity*, p. 118), "Paulinism cares little for historical events except as materials for allegory. This indifference extends," he rightly remarks, "not only to the Old Testament but to the actual life of Jesus on earth" (2 *Cor.* 5[16]). The close relationship between Paulinism and Gnosticism is too patent a fact to be ignored.

Paul and Philo.

There are those who like the proverbial drowning man's straw catch at the idea that Paulinism is a religion and Gnosticism is a philosophy, so there can not be a close relationship between the two. But it makes one's heart good to read in Dr. Smith : "If the systems of these primitive Gnostics had reached us in their entirety, and not merely in detached bits transmitted and perhaps often disfigured by hostile hands, it seems in the last degree probable that we should be compelled to yield them a large tribute of respect as earnest religionists and no mean thinkers" (*Ecce Deus*, pp. 11-12). Philo's principle of Logos, latterly incorporated in the gospel of John and made canonical when, by the stress of circumstances, heresy had to be made orthodoxy, was stamped on every page of Pauline theology. In fact, epistles are replete with terminology borrowed from the Gonstics. "We have Philo, at the traditional beginning of the Christian era, accumulating round the Logos the various aspects of earlier Word and Sophia," emphasises Mr. Robertson, "and fitfully adding to them those of divine Sonship and Messiahship, and even the creative function of Deniourgos, thus at times reducing Yahweh to a somewhat remote abstraction" (P. C. p. 223). So none need be surprised why in the Christian movement the Father was deposed by the Son. It is easy to show that Philo anticipated the

Christian doctrine of Trinity. The self-deluded may be tempted to think that Philo obtained these ideas from his association with the Christians. The refutation comes from a Doctor of Divinity. "Needless to say," observes Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy, "there is no trace of acquaintance on his part with Jesus or His foremost apostle." [We refrain from raising the question, if Jesus was historical why he is unknown to Philo, a profoundly religious man who was born 20 years before Jesus and outlived him by several years] "We cannot tell," continues the Doctor, "whether he ever came into contact with the Christian faith. The tradition of his meeting Peter at Rome seems to be purely legendary" (*Philo's Contribution to Religion*, pp. 6—7). The hypothesis is to be rejected for more than one vital consideration. At that time Christianity as such, if it existed at all, had no theology of its own. In Christianity some ideas are more fixed with a wrong bias. It was chronologically impossible for Philo to borrow. Nor would Philo have the mood to associate with the Christians, far less to borrow from them. John's gospel is of a far later origin. However, Mr. Bryant has, unwittingly perhaps, found a way to shake off this delusion by enumerating the characteristics of Logos which, being amplified by Mr. Robertson, have reached the number 37 from which we take a few only at random. The Logos is (i) Son of God, (ii) Second Divinity, (iii) First Begotten Son of God, (vii) Instrument by whom the world was created, (ix) Light of the world, (x) Alone can see God, (xx) Messenger sent from God, (xxiv) Shepherd of God's flock, (xxvi) Physician who heals all evils, (xxxv) Word, High Priest and Mediator. So Christianity technically so called must needs have no need of a fresh starting point. It was a continuation. Of course, as Principal Drummond has shown, we should "not hastily assume that *logos* always denotes the same subject" for Philo. He also points out that "our difficulty is increased by the fact that we have no corresponding term of equal elasticity in our own language" (*Philo*, vol. ii, p. 158). Really, it is not expected that a Jew of Alexandria at the beginning of the era would propound such an idea consistently that a learned divine eighteen hundred years after can not explain without self-contradictions. So if we find contradictions in Paul there is nothing to be astonished at it. However, Philo personified the divine idea, the ideal man, in the shape of the Logos. In Paul, Christ is a comprehensive name for all humanity symbolically presented as a personal being, as in the famous Rigvedic hymn, the world in its natural interpretation has been symbolised as *Purusha*. By drawing the parallel more tightly Dr. Drews observes: "Just as Christ is made flesh and assumes human form, so Philo's Logos descends from his heavenly sphere and

Paulinism is Gnosticism.

enters the world of sense to give strength to the good, and save man from sin (cf. परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् । Gita) and lead them to their true home the Kingdom of heaven and their heavenly father" (*Witnesses*, p. 67). No wonder, Paul's was the gospel of *Gnosis*, both heathen and Christian, orthodox as well as heretical. In both, strong emphasis is given to "knowledge" or revelation we call direct perception (अपरोक्षानुभूति) as opposed to tradition or scripture. They believed in the continued "manifestation of the truth." A sharp antithesis between God and the world; letter and spirit; body and soul; flesh and spirit; natural man and spiritual man—is the characteristic of both (Vide Drummond's *Philo*, p. 23, vol. i) That is, dualism is a distinguishing feature of Paulinism, it is no less of the Gnostic teaching. If there are anti-Judaic tendencies among the Gnostics; in spite of certain passages interpolated to effect a reconciliation, these very tendencies are not less marked in the epistles. Though there are differences, they are shared by different Gnostic systems as well. There are, as a matter of course, theological differences between Bráhmas and Bráhmas. Besides, to read between the lines, the gospel story is itself an allegory with a profound meaning hidden in it—man's spiritual life dramatised, as is the case with so many *Puránas* and *Tantras* in our country. It is said, Jesus never opened his mouth except in parables. The disciples most faithfully ended in reconstructing a grand parable The meaning was gradually misunderstood by the unenlightened multitude who now began to dominate the Church. So that in the apocryphal books we see only childish miracles in the place of stories intended in the canonical gospels to be allegories for the use of the illuminated. The gospel story is not the history of the development of an individual life. In that case the contradictions therein can not even be explained away. It is in fact the history of the Church—how it grew out of the hundred conflicts between, and ultimate combination of, the Judaic and Gentilised ideas. In this way sprung "the Gospel history as the history of the God-man, [not of the good man as our Unitarian friends would have us believe !] who owes his early existence to the needs of the Church (or, in other words, the unphilosophic multitude), simply because as pure idea he must necessarily remain unknown to them. The picture of Christ was thus deliberately created in the interest of the Church" (*Radical Views*, p.56-57). Indeed it was after the Pauline ideas drawn from the Gnostics, as shown above, were widely, assimilated by the Church, so the Christ-figure was created much in the same way as in our *Puránas and Tantras* as suggested above :

साधकानां हितार्थाय ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना । *

Origen, one of the most philosophical of early Fathers, justifies us in this view when he says: "To the carnal they taught the gospel in a literal way, preaching Jesus Christ, and him crucified, but to persons further advanced and burning with love for divine celestial wisdom, they communicated the *Logos*" (as quoted by Dr Priestly in his *Corruptions of Christianity*, p. 19). Dr. Priestly, at the latter half of the 18th century in his above mentioned illuminating disquisitions, in the same vein asserted that the deification of Christ was due to the personification of the Logos, and expatiated on the point that Christianity was popularised by assimilating the philosophical opinions of the heathen world, which had then begun to infect the Jews themselves (Ibid p. 8). As Priestly began with the prepossession of the historicity of Jesus, he is not expected to have at all surmised the identity of the deification of Jesus with the personification of *Logos*. But if we read history aright, no Jesuine movement was necessary for the inauguration of Christianity. Before the gospels were written Philo and his Alexandrian predecessors, from whom Paul can be said to have borrowed the whole of his doctrine, had the mystic philosophy of the personification of Logos completed, thereby supplying a rational basis to the pre-Christian Gnosticism. For Philo's fondness for personification one may with profit consult Principal Dummond (*Philo*. vol. ii, pp. 123-134). And this Philo, according to Dr. Priestly, "far excelled all who had gone before him" in this method of allegorisation and personification of abstract ideas. And the Christian Fathers" the Dr. continues, "at length converted an innocent allegory into what was little better than Pagan idolatry". But in reality it was already there before the Fathers came to the field. They only took advantage of it. To tell the truth, Christianity began as a monotheism—the Hebrew influence connoting that much. But the creed developed not in the fatherland, but in Dispersion through collaboration with Heathen philosopies and mythologies. In the Mediterranean world, especially at Alexandria, Platonism and neo-Platonic doctrines took it altogether out of its original setting and gave it a new turning. Philosophy is never at ease with absolute monism. Attributes are given to God. And religion properly so-called does not dispense with poetry. God's attributes are personified or allegorically spoken of. Human mind is a very complex entity.

Allegory historicised.

* Clement of Alexandria held exactly the same view: "It was not designed for the multitude, but communicated to those only who were capable of receiving it orally, not by writing." See *Clement of Alexandria*, p. 241, by Dr. Kaye, Bishop of Lincoln.

Some are liberally disposed, others strictly puritanic. The purists scent evil even in the allegorical or figurative representations of divine attributes. We have them in our midst in the Bráhma Samáj. But the simple-minded have a tendency to give concrete forms to all abstract concepts. It is they who gave the *Logos* a local habitation and a name in Jesus Christ.

Christ is *Logos* transformed.

But it is a far cry from a mere personification of an attribute to the *Logos* a human personality. The intervening space is covered by a volatile stage which may be called "अव्यक्तं व्याचिकीर्षितम्"—not yet manifested but on the road to manifestation. Of this stage we have ample proof in the early history of Christianity. When the purist brought the charge of polytheism at the door, Tertullian apologised : "When I say that the Father is one, the Son another, and the Spirit a third, an unlearned and perverse person understand as if I mean a diversity." A step farther down in the evolution we find in Eusebius : "If he says, "this makes them apprehensive lest we should seem to introduce two Gods, let them know that, though we do indeed acknowledge the Son to be God, yet there is (absolutely) but one God," (Ibid pp 21-22). Really the Logos idea beginning with Philo (why Philo, in the *Book of Enoch* long before, the Messiah was identified with Logos), took longer time, than one would like to suppose that it should take, to assume a definite shape. As a matter of fact, well informed historians will tell us that the Christian doctrine of Logos is a dogmatic accretion, half philosophy half myth, gathered round a cult of sacrifice (to be elaborated hereafter, see *infra* Chap. xx c) by the imposition of hazy Yahwehistic speculations on Gentile notions. Yes, there is no end of the processes that contributed to the up-building of this syncretic creed formed in a religiously crowded environment such as the then Mediterranean world. Jesus, the Logos Deity, was produced by the same primitive psychological process as the natural deities—*Váyu*, *Agni* or *Varuna*, i.e., by the personifications of abstractions. M. Loisy is of opinion that "the Trinity and the Incarnation are Greek dogmas" (*The Gospel and the Church*, p. 195).

At this stage, however, it is necessary to ward off a possible misinterpretation. Passages, interpolated or otherwise, in which a reference to the human form is more or less distinct, are designed more to guard against the writer's theology being wholly identified with Doceticism or Gnosticism than to indicate any historical person. If theologians find an historical Jesus in such cases, it is not the result, but the assumption of their *modus operandi*. Any reference to a human form should not or need not be construed in this way. The Son of the Most High God as

Meaning of human traits in Jesus.

Redeemer is not the speciality of the epistles and, for the matter of that, of later Christianity. What Paul did was to give a vivid and systematic expression to this Pagan idea of the suffering God who died to rise again. *Mutatis mutandis*, this is also the Jewish idea of the fifty-third Chapter of Prophet *Isaiah*. So no amount of spiritualising could effect the total effacement of the human features. But it does not necessarily mean a reference to a man who appeared on the earth at a definite period of history. Take for example, the question of crucifixion

Crucifixion not necessarily an historical fact.

--the theme that recurs at every turn. Even to visualise the scene, it does not at all require the historical fact of a crucified man. The story of "the holy one crucified or pierced" is as old as this old planet of ours; and men all the world over--the ancient peoples too, observed it and recorded it in definite terms, as the legend is due to an astral phenomenon which we expect to delineate in a subsequent chapter: See Chap. xvii. The astral myth with many others have contributed its quota to build up the grand edifice of crucifixion. What is then the conclusion ? Does Paul—whoever else he may not be,—he is no doubt the author of the uninterpolated Epistles and is taken undoubtedly for "a Hebrew, Son of Hebrews"-- deify a mere man ? After examining some verses of the Old Testament, Dr. Couchoud shows that Paul simply substitutes Jesus in the place of Yahweh and builds his theology. No, Paul's Jesus can not be a man. It would be the most miraculous of all miracles if Paul's Jesus were an historical personage. In the way of an historical Jesus, "the invincible obstacle is the worship of Jesus—the Christian religion. At bottom," insists this French Doctor, "the existence of Christianity, far from proving the existence of Jesus [i. e. the existence of man-Jesus], renders it impossible" (*The Enigma of Jesus*, p. 86).

Gnosticism was not the only mystic movement in the ancient world. So,

Prototypes of Paulinism

to add a Son-God to the Jewish Father-God Paul did not depend on Gnosticism alone. The redemption by the Son is a very widespread ancient cult. The Babylonian redeemer Son-God Marduk *(Merodoch)* was sent by his father Ea to the earth to rescue men from their moral and spiritual degradation. Among the Greeks there were many redeeming Gods, one of whom Jason or Josios (Gk. equivalent for Jesus) was commissioned for the same purpose, and after a tragical death returned to the circle of the blessed. The Phrygians, the Syrians and the Egyptians likewise worshipped their Attis, Adonis and Osiris, who, suffered, died and rose again for humanity. The Essenes to whom Jesus is made to have belonged had the divine saviour

and mediator as the very kernel of their faith. The last, though not the least, is the Old Testament *Isaiah*, the storehouse of the materials of which the New Testament history was made. The fifty-third chapter of *Isaiah* supplies us the key to open the secret. There we find the suffering "Servant of God" who has already appeared in the form of man—a man of sorrows, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; mocked, despised, rejected and sacrificed in expiation of our sins, rises again in glory and taken to heaven that the "kingdom of God" be established on earth. So biographical basis was no more wanting for Paul's Christ-drama than for the priests of Mithraism. The cult of Mithra had a strong centre at Tarsus and was, for three hundred years, the outstanding rival of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Who knows that Paul as a child did not receive, if at all, his first impression of the suffering, dying, and risen saviour-God from Mithraism in his Cilician home? Now, if one told the priests that their Mithra was only a mythical Sun-god, would not the reply be: "Much learning has made you mad?" For details, see Chaps. xviii and xix.

Gentilisation of Judaism.

"Paulinism was a deep-going effort, perhaps not at first conscious of its own meaning", says Mr. Whittaker, "to cut Christianity loose from Judaism and to raise it to the stage of a universal religion" (O. Ch., p. 127). But the idea of the universal religion is no invention of Paul nor, if ever, of Jesus or any Jesuist. The Messianic kingdom in which the Gentiles would share is preached in the Patriarchal *Testaments*, already alluded to, written in Hebrew by a Pharisee more than a century before the Christian era (See *supra* p. 105). It might have been,—why might have been, it most assuredly was adopted by the disciples. Because after the fall of Jerusalem most naturally the movement appealed to the civilized Gentiles, as the sacred domicile was then gone, and with it the circumcision also. The catastrophe gave an impetus to the severance of the cult from the dominating religion. So "it is obvious," avers Mr. Robertson (J. P., p. 141) "that an abandonment of such a Jewish bar as circumcision would give the developing cult a great advantage over the other in propaganda among Gentiles. Circumcision must have been a highly repellent detail for Hellenistic Gentiles in general; and a Gospel which dispensed with it would have a new chance of making headway," for which the coast was made clear by the propagation of Essenic and Gnostic mysticism, not to speak, among others, of the pre-Christian Jesus-cult* as practised in

* It is to be noted that no Evangelist applies the name "Christians" to the followers of Jesus. It occurs only once in the *Acts*—an evident interpolation, a pertinent one though.

the rite of "Jesus Barabbas" (Philo's "Karabbas"). That is, of course, a different story and fully discussed in Chap. xx e. But this universalisation did not take place without the necessary mortal struggle, with the reminiscences of which the New Testament is replete. Though no such mention is made in the *Epistles*, the *Acts* makes Paul an original Saul persecuting the Church, but the Ebionites knew him always as "Paul of Tarsus." This is a Jewish figment, while Peter denying Jesus was a fiction prepared by Gentiles for "home" consumption. All these fables are due to severe doctrinal differences, and suggest a latter-day handling of the traditions of early strifes. But the reconciliation became inevitable, perhaps, much later than the Epistles took their present shape, and by an ecclesiastical myth Peter was turned into a pro-Gentile colleague of Paul. But this could not happen till the middle of the second century. Besides, if we take the *Romans* alone which is held by some authorities to be neither Pauline nor an epistle, we find the signs of devolpments through different hands. Paulinism that declared the law null and void and preached salvation by grace alone ("देबप्रसादः"), as though men's endeavours ("तपःप्रभाबः") counted for nothing, was really a fierce attack on the Old Testament. So it was a double-edged heresy—heresy against the Old Testament in which it had the full sympathy of Gnosticism, and also against the Jesuism of the early disciples who were for all practical purposes, the narrow Jews.

Growth of Paulinism.

But this revolutionary doctrine naturally provoked opposition necessarily from the Jews. Unlike the religious propaganda of the early disciples with whom spoken words were all in all, Paulinism, when discovered, was already a theology, and its existence is not traced until such heretics as Gnostic Basilides and Marcion were found to hold it in high honour. This is a sure indication of its much later introduction than the traditionalists would have us agree to. So, in defence, chapters after chapters were added—some defending justification by faith, (*Rom* 5^{8}) ; some demonstrating the equality of Jews and Gentiles before grace (1^{16} and 3^{31}) ; some showing insignificance of superior blood relation (4), others on Israel's rejection (7 and 11). Thus grew the Pauline literature. It took time and could in no wise be put just after the death of Christ. How is it that still in the third century the Christianity of St. Paul was sharply opposed by the orthodox community ? Is not Paul the Apostle, a Jew of Jews, a Pharisee, having commission directly from the Lord through a vision, bold enough to call his evangel "my Gospel", a mortal enemy of the Church turned next moment into a zealous follower by a

miracle but forthwith coming out to preach a revolutionary propoganda? It is a psychological puzzle indeed! Was it not to dupe the unwary that all these fables were invented when Pauline Christianity had to be canonised? And the world allowed itself about two long thousand years to remain bound by this hypnotic spell. But no longer that the veil is lifted.

Connection between Jesusism and Paulinism an invention.

The negative reply given to the question: "Is there no reference to the historical Jesus in the Pauline letters"? has caused much heart-searching in the devecote of the conservative theologians. So hopeless is the situation that Dr. Arno Neumann could not repress his disappointment: "It is certainly to be regretted that the historical Jesus took a comparatively subordinate place in his teaching." (*Jesus*, p. 5). Even the Master of Balliol, Professor Edward Caird is constrained to fling it in the face of the St. Paul's Society: " It is no very great exaggeration to say that we should not gather from St. Paul's Epistles that he knew anything or cared to know anything, of the life of Christ except that he suffered and died and rose again." (*The Hibbert Journal*, Oct., 1903.). Unfortunately for theologians the three incidents referred to are characteristics of all saviour Gods or Christs who had reigned before Christianity caught hold of the field. So this incidental reference to a suffering and dying and rising Christ does not prove anything of a historical personality. *Rising* rather proves the contrary. There would be no internal proof but for some evidently interpolated passages, and these passages, occasionally cited by them, have been shown quite useless for the purpose. Take for example, 1 *Cor*. 15$^{3-11}$ where the risen Christ was seen "of the twelve'" after that "of above five hundred brethren at once" and "then of all the apostles." First, here there is not only *interpolation*, but the pure documentary analysis will show that "*the interpolation has been added to*"—*Twelve,* then *five hundred*, then *all*! "Twelve" betrays the ignorance of Judas' story; so, added evidently when the story was not very current; and of "the five hundred" there is no trace either in the Gospels or in the *Acts*, therefore a late church fable. As regards 1 *Cor*. 11^{23} where "the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread" the whole betrayal * incident has both historically and psychologically been discredited as an invention to keep our grandam, the Old Testament in good humour (see *infra* Chap. xv). The story grew in stature as the Jesus-cult developed into its present form. It is an absurd fiction —hiring a man to identify one who is walking in the streets all day long. "For Judas to have betrayed Jesus", Katusky says in his *Christentums*, "is much the same as if the Berlin police were to pay

a spy to point out to them the man named Bebel". The Greek word *paradidonai* does not mean "betray" at all, but "give up," and is actually taken from *Isaiah* 53[12] (*Witnesses* p. 83). All critics agree that the whole passage is a "misfit" to the content. Not only Drews and Robertson, Smith and Whittaker but the theologians Straatman and Bruins, also Steck, Volter and Schlager, all speak of the passage in this strain. Van Manen took it to be a collection of ancient sayings in the liturgical form introduced to displace the love-feasts of the Community which had some obscene features perhaps inherited from some primitive cults When the liturgical use of them was established in the Church, the form was interpolated into the text of Paul in order to support it with the authority of the apostle. *Matthew* and *Mark* know nothing of this form. As to breaking bread, eating "my body" and drinking "my blood," they all form parts of a merry myth—a mystery rite taken from ancient mystery cults.* And the mystery character of Pauline *evangel* has been put beyond all doubts by Reitzenstein in his essay, *Die Hellenistischen* (Vide *Witnesses*). There is indubitable internal evidence that the passage is an interpolation. In verses 17-22, we hear of *agape* or the common lovefeast of the Community. Then the *supper* has most evidently been interpolated. After that the theme of the lovefeast is again resumed. The interpolatory character of the passage can evade the searching eyes of those only who search with their eyes blindfolded for some preconception. Here we must refer to a plausible objection finally to set it at rest. It may be urged, not without reason, that every passage hostile to the theory is thus got rid of to clear the coast, albeit, a very convenient mode of silencing the opponent. But, unfortunately for the objector, apart from the intrinsic value of the argument in a particular case, most of these passages were detected to be interpolation before the radical theory of unhistoricity was ever dreamt of. So no question can be raised that the cases were not considered on their own merits. On the other hand, nothing is proved by a few doctrinal phrases here and there, intelligible only as interpolations and detachable from its context when the text is sifted. The historicist must show such a passage in a connection when the question of interpolation does not arise, and where this is the main theme running through the whole web. This he has failed to do, leading negatively to the conclusion disastrous to the claim of historicity.

The question of Interpolation *bona fide.*

* "The eating of God meets us as in the eating of the totem animal, the drinking of blood in the Attis mysteries, etc." Pfister's *Psychoanalytic Method.* Primitive peoples had particular animals as *pitris or devas* of their respective tribes, the flesh of which was prohibited among them except as the part of a sacrificial rite.

Is not the personality of Paul stamped on the pages of his epistles? This is the next question. But, pray, how do you know that personality? Why, from these very epistles which, in their turn, are proved genuine by this personality. Excellent! Herr theologian in his sweet self-forgetfulness is quite oblivious that he is caught in a *vicious circle*. The argument assumes precisely what is to be proved. "A standard is used." Says Van Manen, "which has been taken from the Epistle or Epistles whose genuineness is in question, and students proceed as if the picture of the apostle was obtained apart from the Epistle or Epistles to which it is applied. They exclaim: Paul to the life! They recognise one feature after another But what have they really proved? They have merely hoaxed themselves" (*Romerbrief*). And Manen is a believer in the historicity. "On the principles of our opponents," Dr. Drews warns us, "Nietzsche's work, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, must have been written by the ancient Persian religious founder, because it is so personal, so original, so rich in tones and shades. On the same principles, the fourth gospel was evidently written by the apostle John; and, as a matter of fact, up to the middle of the last century theologians affected to perceive in it the very heart-beat of the disciple whom Jesus loved" (*Witnesses*, p. 105). "A writer of the requisite degree of power" Mr. Wittaker parries with the argument, "will not fail of effect when speaking under some great name of the past instead of under his own" (*Origins of Christianity*, p. 127). So, it behoves us to listen to one who believes in the historicity of Jesus—"We need not repeat it; the life-work and living figure of Jesus are not reflected in the Pauline Theology. There can be no doubt about this fact. He, of whom Paul professed himself the disciple and servant," affirms Dr. Wrede, the German theologian in his *Paulus*, "was not the historical human being Jesus, but another.'!

Now the net result of our inquiry about Pauline Christianity comes to this that the so-called Pauline epistles like all others are spurious—some are pre-Christian, some post-Christian but all freely interpolated upon and Christianised. Yet, if the account of the Lord's Supper and the reference to "the twelve" are ignored as evident interpolations, the epistolary Christianity gives us a cult, certainly Jewish in origin, where "the crucified Jesus—called the Messiah or Christos or Anointed One figures as a saving sacrifice, but counts for absolutely nothing as a teacher or even as a wonder-worker "(S. H. C., p. 2). This "crucified Jesus" is fully accounted for by the symbolical Jesus of Gnosticism ostensibly influenced by the Jews of Dispersion, and it is historically attested that in the first century the Gentiles possessed some of the Pauline and other epistles such as of Clement called Bishop of Rome,

and of Martyr Ignatius and also a memoir of Jesus that contained more in some but less in other respects than the cononical gospels. Yet Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century knows no Pauline epistles. This evidently proves two Christist or Messianic movements—one discrediting the other, as Pauline movement surely discredits the gospel movement and the gospel Christianity wholly differs from that of Paul. But which would claim priority? The gospel Christianity seems to be the junior movement. In this respect the New Testament stands on the same footing with the Old. "As the Book of Judges reveals a state of Hebrew life quite incompatible with that described in the Pentateuch as having preceded it, so do the epistles of Paul reveal a stage of Christist propaganda incompatible with any such prior development as is set forth in the gospel" (Ibid pp. 2-3). So it must be conceded that the documents describing the earlier developments are later in origin.

Krishna-and Christ-Cults.

Though they are fused into one, originally they were rival movements. In this we have an exact parallel in our Krishna Cult. The cult is bisected into two rival camps—the *Mathurá* and *Brindábana* creeds and *Aiśvarya* (Glory) and *Mádhurya* (Sweetness) forms of Bhakti. The followers of *Mádhurya* ever look askance at the other sectaries, though historically the *Aiśvarya* comes first, the *Mahábhárata* being prior to the *Bhágavata* and logically it should be so. The books have been so arranged and anecdotes are so forced into their places that *Mádhurya* takes precedence of *Aiśvarya*. These are, in reality, two independent Krishna cults ultimately incorporated into one, though their rivalry still exists. As a practical metaphysico-devotional cult, the *Mádhurya* cult is wholly mythicosymbolical whereas its rival picked up certain historical incidents from here and there. *Mutadis mutandis* the Krishna of the *Bhágavata* stands in the same relation to the Krishna of the *Mahábhárata* as the Christ of the Pauline epistles to that of the canonical gospels.

But finally an answer must be given to the query—who was this Paul at whose door the developed Christian doctrines and their epistolary exposition are laid? Was he an historical personage or a wholly mythical one? Of course, considering how important writings are often attributed to purely fictitious persons in all ages, no historical personality is required to explain Pauline literature. But Whittaker suggests what seems to be very plausible that some one Paul "belonged to a group of Messianic propagandists of Judaism" who were itenerant preachers. Paul was the most prominent of them all frequently journeying from place to place. From a memory of this propagandism of Messianic cult the apostles in general and Paul in particu-

Who is Paul, then?

lar were introduced into the New Testament narrative "imaginatively transformed into the "apostles" of a personal Jesus who was not merely to come (like the Messiah as at first conceived), but had already come." So Paul is neither historical nor altogether mythical but a legendary personage (vide *Origins of Christianity*, pp. 40 and 177). Yes, Paul can not be mythical. The propagandist Paul may be so, but Paul, the writer of the *Epistles* can not be, because the earliest evidence of Christianity which is really a continuation of the pre-Christian Gnostic faith, is to be found in the *Epistles* of Paul. And the gospels were manufactured to fill the gaps in the epistles. The *Acts*, of course, intervenes as suggested by M. Couchoud. But the gospel theology contradicts Pauline Christianity. So if we retain the *Epistles* Jesus must go. "Critics have taken pains to construct for us a historical Jesus with some show of probability. But," argues Dr. Couchoud, "they have not realised that the more probable they rendered Jesus the more improbable they rendered Paul" (*The Enigma of Jesus*, p. 87). And the Paul of the epistles is a tangible fact whose existence can in no way be disavowed.

CHAPTER IX.

Essenism, Gnosticism and Christianity

1

Neander in his *Life of Jesus* divides Israel at the beginning of the Christian era into three sections: Pharisees, Sadducees and the Mystics. Of the mystics we read in *The Temple Dictionary of the Bible* that "they were not like the Sadducees, taken up with politics and using religion as a cloak of covetousness." The Sadducees, according to the author, were really materialists ridiculing the belief in the life after, and the Pharisees, fanatics for the mere letter of the law. Here it is to be noted that the monumental ignorance of the Christian writers about, and their enormous capacity following in the wake of the New Testament writers to do injustice to, the contemporary Jewish religious sects who are reported to have opposed Jesus, have become almost proverbial. Many scholars have protested in recent times. We refer the reader only to Herford's *The Pharisees*. However, the *Temple Dictionary* goes on: The mystics "sought the life of contemplation living in a community of celibates." Who then, were these mystic people? "About two hundred years before the Christian era," Mr. Arthur Lillie informs us (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 2), "a remarkable mystical movement arose amongst the Jews. It came from Alexandria." In Egypt they were known as Therapeuts, but in Palestine called Essenes and Nazarites. As Principal Drummond interprets him, Philo was not an ascetic, though he was fully conscious of the necessity of controlling the senses and passions for the beatific vision of God. But this control was not to be attained by artificial methods. From his own experience he learned that seclusion was not an unmixed good. So he led a social life trying to keep himself free from its evil. Piety must be sincere and inward. The ritual should not be mistaken for holiness, and bodily mortification for temperance. So he deplores the tendency of the devout and thoughtful people, whether Jew or Gentile, towards asceticism; because "we must first prove our virtue in public and private affairs and then only may we pass on from the practical to the contemplative life" (*Philo* vol. i, pp. 24-25). How profoundly does the sentiment accord with the Hindu scheme of life—शोधयित्वा परिव्रजेत् —After repaying all his debts a man may renounce the world—first *Karma*, then *jnana* (नैष्कर्म्य). Philo, nevertheless, eulogises the exemplary lives of the Essenes for their noble endeavours after life eternal, in his letter to Hephæstion in the following glowing terms: "Their

Philo and Josephus on Essenism.

cells are scattered about the region bordering on the further shore of the Lake Mareotis. The members of either sex live a single and ascetic life, spending their time in fasting and contemplation, in prayer or reading. They believe themselves favoured with divine illumination—an inner light. They assemble on the Sabbath for worship and listen to mystical discourses on the traditional lore which, they say, has been handed down in secret among themselves" (*Buddhism in Christendom*, pp. 73-74). From Philo the philosopher we find the inner side, from Josephus the historian, especially the outerside of the Essenic life. Josephus once belonged to this sect, afterwards became a Pharisee. And there was no love lost between these two sects of Judaism. So we need not apprehend any exaggeration of the Essenic virtues at the hand of the historian when he praises them in equal terms in his *History of the Jewish War*. For fear of becoming tedious we do not give the details of what is said about the Essenes in that book. In all consensus of opinion, as Josephus informs us, they were "the most virtuous men on earth". From his account an Essene turns out to be the Western replica of the Buddhist monk. Speaking of the sect Mr. Robertson observes: "As a whole, the system had so much in common with that of the Pythagoreans on the one hand, and with the Mazdean religion and Buddhism on the other, that it must be held to prove a connection between these, and to point to a movement which once spread over Asia as far as Buddhist India, and over the Mediterranean world as far as early Grecian Italy, surviving for many centuries in scattered sects" (S. H. C., p. 50). How Christianity arose out of Essenism is evident from the following: "The Essenes came in contact with the people as healers, prophets, dream-interpreters and exorcists, not as teachers or preachers" (Geikie's *Life of Christ*, p. 368, vol. i). The primitive Christians had no other business. Even the Apostles returned and reported an account of exorcism only. So it is hopeless to try to establish any difference between Essenism and early Christianity in this respect. However, the secret teachings of the Essenes are not a lost thing to us. On the authority of such eminent scholars as "Reuchlin, Joel, and M. Franck, of the Institute of France" we still have them in the *Kabbalah* which implies secret tradition. Really, the *Sohar* of the Kabbalah and the *Codex Nasaraens* were their scriptures. "The rites of this, the higher section of Judaism"

Influence of Buddhism on Essenism

Mr. Lillie affirms, "were purely Buddhist," and the two above mentioned "remarkable works which embody their teaching, minutely reproduce the theogony of Buddhism" (p. 2). Yes, the habitats of these ascetics in the

Alexandrian jungles as described by Philo are true copies of the monasteries of the Buddhist monks and nuns. As to their theosophy we can put implicit faith on what Philo says: "Their principle at least is true. The soul which is occupied with things above, and is initiated into the mysteries of the Lord cannot but account the body evil, even hostile. [How like the predecessor of Plotinus!] The soul of man is divine, and his highest wisdom is to become as much as possible a stranger to the body with its embarrassing appetites. God has breathed into man from heaven a portion of his own divinity. The alliance with an upper world, we are conscious, would be impossible," concludes the father of Neo-Platonism in a philosophising mood, "were not the soul of man an indivisible portion of that divine and blessed spirit." And to bring about this alliance with the upper world was the mission of the Indian *Yogi*. This we find to have been the object of an Essene's life also. So Dean Milman cynically observed that those mystics sprung from the *contemplative and indolent fraternities* of India. What wonder that a most subtle Christian thinker like Dean Mansel (*Gnostic Heresies*) would be obliged to admit that the Essenic movement "was due to Buddhist missionaries, who visited Egypt within two generations of the time of Alexander the Great." (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 75). The proposition that Buddhism actually reached Alexandria has been now put beyond all reasonable doubts by the Girnar Rock Edict of Asoka. (See *infra* Chap. xi). The famous term *Gnosticism* is only the Greek rendering of *Buddhism*—(Gnosis—*Buddhi*). Buddhism must have undoubtedly been preached in Alexandria. "That the anti-mystical section of the early Christian Church was quite aware whence Gnosticism came is shown by the form of adjudication prescribed for those who renounced it. It expressly mentions *Buddha* and *S'ákya*" (Ibid p. 233). One form of the abjuration as quoted in his *Origins* (p. 50) by Thomas Whittaker from the original Greek formula is: "I anathematise those who say that Zarades (i. e., Zarathustra) and Buddha and Christ and Manichaeus and the Sun [Mithra?] are one and the same." This theological liberalism was characteristic of the Gnostics who had already discarded the narrow view of the scriptural authority of the Old Testament. However, "he [who contends that Buddhism did not reach the West] ignores Deans Mansel and Milman, and is silent about Colebrooke, and Lassen, and Prinsep. Also he has not a word to say about the testimony of Aśoka, and the flood of light let in upon the intercourse between India and the West by recent Orientalists" (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 230-232). See *supra* p. 5 f. n., and *infra* Chap. XI.

In the *Sohar* and *Codex* the Supreme Being is described as EN SOPH

—Endless, Boundless. In this boundlessness he cannot be comprehended by the intellect nor clearly described in words, for there is nothing that can make His existence felt by us. He is "Pure Splendour," the "Eternal and Infinite Light." He is "Beauty", "Life," "Justice" and "Pity." He is "Inert Existence" "absolute unity and there is nothing without Him." From Him emanate all forms. "All creatures ask each other what is His name, and are compelled to reply that he has none—no name that can be evoked, no nature that can be known. Only with a pure heart can one attain to that light." The God of the Gnostics, like EN SOPH is "formless, inconceivable, inactive, and being perfect, is incapable of imperfect work. He is "Unnamable". Now let us turn to the original of all this—Primordial, Transcendental Buddha and the above I presume, exactly tallies with Tathágata's idea of Nirvána which is to be known as *ajáta* (Unborn), and *abhuta* (Without beginning) and *akrita* (Unmade). and by knowing which one attains immortality. "Adi Buddha, the Swayambhu, is the formless, passionless, inactive, indefinable, illimitable being that the *Kabbalah* describes under the title EN SOPH." "He is the form of all things, yet formless" Buddhist Scriptures—"has a form, yet has no form" (*Sohar*). The Buddhist says: "His image is Sunyatá, who is like a cypher, or point infinite." Says Dr. Carpenter about the history of the Buddhistic conception of the *Purusha*: "Like the Greek term *Logos* it was a word of current philosophy. *Purusha* dwelt in the heart, unseen, smaller than the small, and yet he transcended the world and was greater than the great. Language failed to define it, for it might be conceived as a point, without parts or dimensions, and yet it was boundless like space" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, pp. 202-203). The Essene repeats: *En Soph* "is the indivisible point who has no limit." It is not necessary to quote Upanishadic texts to match the above epithets. Really a Buddhist *S'ramana* or a Vedantist *Bráhmana* would have served the Alexandrians equally well. If we can free ourselves from accretions of ages—the allegorical and legendary appendages—and rise to the source of Buddhism, it will not be a difficult task to exchange the Buddha for an Upanishadic *Rishi*, say Yájnavalka, if the latter summoned sufficient courage like the former to assert himself in order to break away from the old tradition altogether as the Buddha is said to have done. On the other hand, Prof. MaxMuller has truly said: "Buddhism might, in fact, have remained a mere sect of Bráminism unless political circumstances had given it an importance and separate existence" (*Natural Religion*, p. 555).

2

How the world came into existence—how from the Perfect One came the imperfect manifold is the difficulty of all philosophies. And all theosophies—Hindu, Bauddha, Essenic, Gnostic, Sufistic—are found to have tried the same method giving rise to cosmogonies fanciful to the extreme. At best they are allegories from which mythologies have developed. But when they agree in details and when the historical contact is established; then the earlier can, without any violence to truth, be taken to have supplied the materials to the chronologically latter. "If technical terms or shibboleths of one creed or cult are borrowed or reproduced intact without translation or adaptation," Dr. Sir Brajendranath Seal, a most accredited authority on the subject, affirms in his *Vaishnavism and Christianity*, "the evidence amounts to certainty, as in the case of Hindu solar astronomy and its indebtedness to Greek science" (p. 4.) Here striking resemblances can not decide either way. But, in the case in hand, the considerations of chronological order, established historical contact and the capacity to lend,—all point to India as the lender. The Kabbalist says that EN SOPH can create only indirectly as "the imperfect and circumscribed nature of the creation precludes the idea that the world was created or even designed by him" (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 87). On the other hand, the beautiful design displayed in the creation can not be the offspring of chance either. So we are to explain by the idea of *emanations*, and the first emanation in all cases is endowed with dual character both divine and human which was afterwards copied and carried to perfection by Christianity. The Rishi says—ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथम: सम्बभूव विश्वस्य कर्त्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता— the first emanation bearing the same name with the Supreme Being is the creator and preserver of the Universe. In the legendary account of the the birth of Buddha the Infant is hailed as *Mahápurusa* (the term has been, in a similar context, translated by Dr. Seal as "the first-begotten," and the Essenic first emanation is Heavenly Man who, representing the Universe "existed in the EN SOPH from all eternity, and became a reality by a mere act' (*p.* 88). And this is exactly what we understand by Neo-Platonic *Logos* and Christian *Word.* Says the Buddhist: "Know that when in the beginning all was perfect void and the five elements were not, Adi Buddha, the stainless, was revealed in the form of flame and light. He is the essence of all essences. He is the instantly produced lord of the Universe, unsustained in Nirvritti, and sustained in Pravritti, whose essence is Nirvritti, of whom all things are forms and who is yet formless, who is Isvara (God), the first intellectual essence, the first Buddha was

India—the Teacher,

revealed by his own will" (pp. 89-90) From countless millions of ages Swayabhu brooded in *Nirrritti* and from him emanated Padmapáni and four other Dhyâni Bhuddhas—the prototypes of the Gnostic Æons beginning with Nous. Says the Gnostic: "From "the Unnamable," the inactive unborn God dwelling in Buthos (representing Buddhistic Nirvritti) proceeded five Beings as Æons" (p. 235), peopling the luminous worlds called Pleroma, (the counterpart of the Buddhist Pravritti.) The world systems, the Gnostic Ogdoads are Buddha Kshetras in Buddhism. Nous and Padmapáni together with the "Heavenly Man" of the Essenes are the active creater in each cause. In Gnostic gems as in Buddhistic sculptures the Divine Child is represented either seated on a lotus or holding one. Curiously enough "a representation of the Child Christ taken from the Catamcombs," says Mr. Lillie," also is emerging from a lotus. (p. 235). However, Padmapáni is also called *Manas* (the exact equivalent of Gnostic *Nous*. Says the Essene: "At first, the EN SOPH, Aged of the Aged or the Holy Aged, sent forth from the spiritual light one spiritual substance or intelligence" called the first *Sephira* (p. 88). He is the Heavenly Man already alluded to. This first Sephira contains nine others of which two - Ophanim and Aralim, wisdom and intelligence called father and mother—are primary ones from the union of which the seven secondary *sephiras* or prefections proceed. All this is fashioned exactly after the Buddhist *Páramitás* (Perfections)—the first being a *Dhyáni* identified with Padmapáni. Then come two other Páramitás, Upáya and Prajná—an exact equivalent of Gnostic *Sophia* and Essenic Ophanim—fatherly and motherly principles from which springs the creation. Most likely from the Buddhist Upáya-Prajná originated the Pauranic *Ardhanáris'vara* to be ultimately traced to the Heavenly Twins (Gemini). Is it an accidental circumstance that Cyril of Jerusalem exclaimed in astonishment: "The Anointed they call male-female?" (p. 91). There are seven minor *Páramitás*. "The Karmikás hold that Upáya and Prajná parented* Manas" (p. 96) and this brings us in touch with Nazarenes or disciples of John, also called Sabeans and Mandites. They gave so much offence by their forceful propaganda to the orthodox Jews that the latter were called upon thrice a day to pray: "Send thy curse, O God, upon the Nazarenes." The term has been misapplied by *Matthew* to Jesus because of the latter's supposed connec-

Buddhistic influence on Gnosticism and Esseni m.

* "Philo calls Sophia the mother of the Logos. Sophia was often conceived (in Semitic fashion) as a female energy of the Deity in the Syrian schools." (Seal's V. C. p 77)., Cp. विद्या and अविद्या of the *S'vetás'vatara*.

tion with Nazareth (See *infra* Chap. XI). This mystic Jewish sect also believed in an Inert God from whom "emanated Mana, the Lord of Glory," and this Mana produced millions of *Manas*. The story is everywhere the same. But about the source there is very little doubt. "The idea of a series of emanations from the ultimate principle," Dr. Seal assures us, in his *Vaishnavism and Christianity*, (p. 19), "is indubitably Indian, and its appearance in the Gnostic and Neo-Platonic systems may not be very improbably ascribed to an indirect Indian influence through the Therapeuts of Egypt and Syria." It is said that the term 'Mana' is found in the Babylonian language also (*The Statesman*, 27. 11. 24). However, "Mana" has been a puzzle to many scholars. In Hebrew it implies a "vase." The solution is not far from us if we remember that the Buddhist first emanation is also called *Manas* and that what part the term plays in this scheme of Emanation. Here, by the way, we have to mention that the Essenes had eightfold inner knowledge exactly corresponding to Buddhistic *Asta-siddhi*. So much, then, of theosophies and cosmogonies.

3

Mr. H. G. Wells, the well-known publicist and historian and according to Anatole France "the greatest intellectual force in the English speaking world" (M. R., April 23) and no hostile critic of the historicity of Jesus, reiterates (in the 1923 February number of the *Pearson's Magazine*) that "within a few score years of the Crucifixion, Christianity had become hopelessly involved with ceremonies and superstitions of immemorial antiquity, and with a theology embodying the inperfectly embalmed philosophy of Alexandria." That Christianity had never been better from its start will be verified to the letter as we proceed. It is not the broad principles of Buddhist renunciation and monachism only that silently passed into the Church, but most of the details, i.e., rites, ceremonies and the outward garments also. So let it not be a surprise to the reader that the Budddhist *Tri-ratna—Dharma**, the eternal and immutable Law; *Buddha*† the Anointed; and *Sangha*, the Church—

* "As through the power of one mind
A host of thoughts is evolved,
So from one Dharma-Body of Tathágata
Are produced all the Buddha-bodies".

† The Tathágata [Buddha] is the great leader of beings;
With skill that is excellent and marvellous,
Guiding all those ignorant souls
He bringeth them by degrees to Enlightenment"

[As quoted in pp. 258-260 of *Buddhism and Christianity* by Dr. Carpenter from Suzuki's *Outlines of Maháyána Buddhism*).

profoundly influenced the formation of the Christian Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost—the last meaning the Church authority. And figuratively the Church i.e. Holy Ghost was taken by Christ as his mother (Vide *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*). "Criticism seems to have justifed the audacious suggestion of Hobbes, that what was originally meant by the sin against the Holy Ghost, which could never be forgiven," says Mr. Whittaker in his *Origins of Christianity* (p. 48), "was resistance to the ecclesiastical power". Here is this very very curious passage quoted by Mr. Lillie (The Work cited, p. 196) from the history of the earliest Christian Church, that of Hegesippus : "In every city that prevails which the Law, the Lord, and the Prophets enjoin." Now, a monastery was called a School of the Prophets in Palestine, and the early missionary too was a "Prophet," as also appears from the *Didâchê*. An excellent corroboration of this view is found in the *Acts* (5^3), where Ananias who sold his property on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Body but kept a part of the sale-proceeds for his personal use in collusion with his wife, is charged by Peter to deceive the "Holy Ghost" !

In the mystical plan the lower life is called "Egypt" and higher life "Jerusalem." "In Philo and Therapeuts the delivery of the Jews from the bondage of Egypt means," Dr. Drews informs us, "the delivery of the soul from the bonds of sense and the passage to the kingdom of the pure spirit." (*Witnesses*, p. 226). Does it any longer remain a mystery why "Out of Egypt have I called my son" (*Hos.* 11^1, and *Math.* 2^{15}) and why in the gospels with so much ado Christ was to enter Jerusalem ? Gnostics are emphatic in their distinction between "Jesus" and "Christ" ! But did the gospellers know what they were about ? The Essenic and Gnostic thoughts and principles and disciplines of life, and their name is legion, are scattered throughout the gospels. But the duped theologian in his mad search after history takes no note of their mystic character. The very life-breath of Gnosticism is Unity in Trinity—the Son being born of the Father by the help of Sophia ("Prajnâ"). But Gnosticism sits loosely on the Church. They, collectively or distributively, are practically monotheists—the Broad Churchmen worshipping the Father, the Low Church, the Son, and the High, the Holy Ghost—though theoretically polytheists in this respect. So, Principal Tuloch in his article on *Gnosticism* in Encyclopedia Britannica as interpreted by Mr. Lillie, is not far wrong in his estimate "that when Christ's disciples described their Master as the King of Æons, and Lord of the Pleroma, the Son who alone could reveal the Father whom no man has seen, they somehow spoke not as missionaries, but victims of a phraseology

Gnostic influence on Christianity.

that they did not understand" (p. 237). And it could not be otherwise, as the gospels were written, all evidences conspire to show, much later than formerly supposed. "A century of criticism, he [A. D. Loman, 1823-1897] declared, had taught us that all the writings of the New Testament belong to the second century; and their contents are full of inconsistencies and historically unreliable. Nobody has proved that *everything* in the Gospel narratives may not have been an invention" (*Radical Views*, p. 18). Of course, this is by the way. It was an extreme exigency of circumstances that led the Church to swallow Gnosticism, tooth and nail. The Gnostics "who were utterly lacking in the historic sense" (R. V., p. 46) already possessed an allegorical gospel of trinity and of the kingdom of heaven of their own with a great deal of astral myth* held in solution, while the Church had none. "The first original impulse to the creation of the whole of this literature is to be sought," affirms Eysinga in *Radical Views* (p. 17) "not in any need that was felt for an authentic account of what Jesus had said and done, but rather in an effort on the part of certain sections of the Church to incorporate their idea of the new religion in the picture of a living person, and to attach themselves to the authority of their revered Master." Certainly it was designed for better effect with the masses. The early disciples preached orally without referring to any document. This view is well supported by the fact that there is no direct reference either in the *Acts* or in the *Epistles* to any saying of Jesus. But the Gnostics at the outset required a Sacred Book as they had discarded the Old Testament revelation. When Pauline epistles were written from the stand-point of Gnostic mysteries, it was no longer possible for Christianity to disregard Gnosticism. Then the original gospel of the Gnostics was elaborated into the gospels of Jesus. If the documents, which dealt with the origin of the Church as well as of Gnosticism but were *purposely* destroyed by the primitive Church authorities and Jewish synagogues, were extant, the matter would be as clear as day light. But the existence of this Gnostic gospel can not be gainsaid. Must we at once reject the idea of a pre-Christian cult of Jesus because we have no first hand evidence of it ? No "We can, however, deduce its existence," in answer argues Dr. Drews in his *Witnesses* (p. 227), "from the few extant traces on the same rules of science on which we deduce any other facts from indications and survivals in historical investigation." The Church assimilated, though superficially, the doctrines of

* "The Gnostic sects, from which Christianity originated, knew at first only an astral Jesus, whose mythic "history" was composed of passages from the prophets *Isaiah*, the twenty-second *Psalm* and *Wisdom*" (*Witnesses*, p. 215).

the Gnostics, branding them, at the same time, as heretics. This is the custom all over the world in all ages. The great S'ankara had to hold his foot firmly on the Buddhistic philosophy that he might fight it to finish. In order to weed out the last trace of Buddhism from the land, Nityánanda's son, Virabhadra, amalgamated the remnants of the Buddhist *Viháras* with his own organisation and laid the foundation, for good or evil, of what we know to be the *Vairági-Vairáginis*, *A'khrá*. And what about the so many reactionary movements in our midst? They say: Strain the desert and you are left with a few lions. Dig deep into those movements and you strike at a few Bráhmic truths—in most cases, their mutilated forms. The early Christian Fathers found their baby Church too weak to carry on a successful combat with the philosophically stronger sects, such as Gnostics, who had a start over them. Therefore, adopting their tenets, the Fathers opened the gate for the absorption of these sects into the Church, thereby, as we know, paving the way for the future doctrinal conflicts and dissensions. Under the circumstances, "instead of the Gnosis of mysteries of the kingdom of heaven being the quintessence of Christianity, it was a foreign and indeed a hostile accretion. A dull monk, named Irenaeus, has so pronounced, and" says Mr. Lillie (p. 237) "his doctrine is final." As an actual fact the synoptical gospels were originally historicised from Gnostic symbolism. But in the Fourth Gospel, in which is combined the philosophy and mythology of Gnosticism, "the outward reality becomes an idea once more—a Christ identified with the Logos; the historical element is elevated to a higher plane, and it fades away into a symbol" (R. V., p. 20). This gospel, which was made canonical when people understood and practised mysticism a little, has in consequence remained a dead letter.

Here is a good specimen how the Gnostic symbol was historicised. Hyppolytus speaks of a pre-Christian Gnostic sect called Nassenians. In one of their hymns the name of Jesus occurs and he is not the so-called Jesus of Nazareth. The scene is in heaven. After comparing soul's troubles with the chaotic storms the hymn proceeds (culled from *Hibbert Journal*. 1911, p. 872):

> Then up spake Jesus: Behold, my father!
> How war with evil has arisen on the earth.
> It rises from thy breath and moveth on.
> Man seeks to escape the dread disorder,
> Yet knows not how he shall safely do it.
> Therefore do thou send me, my father:

I will descend with thy seals in my hand:
I will pass (fare) through all the ages;
And I will make clear all mysteries.
I will also unveil the form of deity;
And all that was hidden of thy holy way,
Will I make known by the name of Gnosis.

Referring to this Hymn Dr. Smith observes: "It would appear established that this idea of traversing (or faring through) benefiting is a pre-Christian idea, refer primarily, not to going about the country of Galilee doing little deeds of kindness (a relatively modern conception of which there is no sign in the gospel), but to the infinitely sublimer outward transit of the divine Jesus earthward" (*Ecce Deus*, p. 87). Consult also (*Witnesses*, p. 220) where Dr. Drews shows how Christian theologians beg the question by trying to prove the hymn to be post-Christian. However, from the phraseology, and not from the ideas only, its Gnostic origin is proved to the hilt. Buddhistic influence also is suspected (see *infra* Chap. xi). "And it is pertinent to this inquiry to observe that Gnosticism has a somewhat large place in the New Testament, e.g. the *Ephesians*, *Colossians*, *Philippians*, *John's* Gospel, and the *Hebrews*. Indeed, Gnosticism in one way or another was a very early form of religious speculation; indeed, Christianity is what it is to-day largely because of its Gnostic elements" (The Rev. W. Wooding, in the *Hibbert Journal*, 1911, p. 872-873).

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching Essenic doctrines and baptising Jesus among others. *Wilderness* has an astral significance. "As the setting sun the Baptist resembles the Greek Hermes Psychopompos, who, at the time of the autumnal equinox leads the constellations or souls into the nether world, the dark and sterile half of the year—symbolically represented by the "wilderness," in which the people come to John, who is here. On the other hand, Jesus, as the rising sun, resembles Hermes Necropompos, who leads back the souls at the time of the vernal equinox to the heavenly home of light, the "kingdom of heaven," their true home" (*Witnesses*, 192-193). On the other hand, the Old Testament motive in the legend of John the Baptist is too apparent to need any reiteration. John's penitential preaching in the gospel is a paraphrase of *Isaiah*, the author being known as *Deutero Isaiah*: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God." Every detail of John's message can thus be gathered from the Prophet (Cp. also *Malachi*). Surely, the phrase "in the wilderness" is an insertion in a wrong place. Whether

the evangelists have copied it for their astral prepossession or Essenic predilection or for both, it is still to be ascertained. Myths are multifocal—this is one other instance. However, the wilderness may be interpreted literally also as the Essenes lived in the arid mountainous regions,—we have the authority of Philo—and baptism was especially an Essenic institution. Robertson (J. P. pp. 90 ; 137) has rightly remarked that in Baptism question the synoptics differ from John showing its non-Jesuist origin, but it was adopted by Jesuists as a means of popular appeal. *Abhisheka* (Baptism) was borrowed from the Buddhists and *name-giving* was transferred from Buddha to Jesus as neither was a Jewish rite. Why baptism only, *fasting* and *temptation* also passed on to the life of Jesus together with many other items too numerous to count. Birth stories have been bodily transplanted. Dr. Seal put a strong case mildly, perhaps on consideration of the Christian susceptibilities of his audience at Rome (1899) in his *Comparative Studies in Vaishnavism and Christianity* (p. 17) when he said: "The similarity between the Vishnuvite and the Christian records in these respects appears to have been due in some measure to a common source, *viz.*, the influence of the Buddhist Játakas and Avadánas".* John came neither eating meat nor drinking wine† and therefore was accused of having a devil. The Essene after the Buddhists had nothing to do with meat or drink.

Buddhist element.

The quarrel between the mystical and anti-mystical Jews must have been a long standing one, the traces of which have been deciphered both in the Old and the New Testament, so much so that the orthodox party acquired the odium of being the prophet-killers. Nazarenes or Nazarites, literally interpreted, are *prophets*. The dispute was about the interpretation of the law. "Origen informs us that Scriptures have two meanings—the one spiritual, the other historical or bodily, the last for those that are not prepared to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Lillie, p. 1). Priests never like it that their people should be weaned away from their idols. So the Pharisees were dead against the mystical sect. But the latter also in their own way obeyed the law. Even Jesus in the gospels is made to believe its immutability. In the *Acts* we find that Paul excused himself in Jerusalem by saying that he offended "neither against the law of the

Mystical Israel.

* "Around the central figure of the religion there gathered at length all kinds of typical stories of divine teachers. Some of these stories are said to be of Buddhistic origin." Whittaker's *Origins of Chtistianity*, pp. 30-31.

† But Jesus came eating and drinking (*Matt.* 11[17]). It can not be otherwise as John represents the winter half and Jesus the summer half of the year.

Jews nor against the Temple". The charge of the other party was: "That is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place" (i. e. Temple). How to explain this paradox? A great authority comes to our rescue. "Our law-giver" (meaning Moses), says Philo in his *Every Virtuous Man Is Free*, "trained into fellowship great numbers of pupils who bear the name of Essenes, being, I imagine, honoured with the appellation by virtue of their holiness." And these people, we learn from the authority of Josephus, refused, at the risk of being stoned, to take part in the sacrifices and festivals of the Mosaic ritual as observed by the dominant party. The only solution is that these sects were heretics and therefore persecuted; because by the word "law" they meant something quite different from what the occupiers of Moses, seat chose to thrust into it. The biographist may naturally ask: Where lived Jesus before he entered his public ministry. The question is a bait to provoke the answer: Why not among the Essenes as, like the Essene, he had no fixed abode; like them he was baptised, for which there was no orthodox sanction; no room for *riches* in both the schemes of life—even to the detail of not possessing two coats when on a journey. Both resorted to righteousness for making converts and gathering disciples. Love of God, love of man, love of virtue, as opposed to sacrifice, form the gospels of both. As in the gospels oaths were deprecated by the Essene also. The Essene wandered relieving the afflicted and succouring the poor. Continence and refusal of marriage i. e. to be made voluntary eunuch of God, as is put in the gospels, are found in both the cases. Fidelity to men in authority (i. e. give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, the gospel version) was an Essenic virtue. The very name signifies lowliness. Under the Persian influence the Essenes learnt to expect the speedy arrival of the kingdom if they walked in the right path. Is it then necessary for a supernatural being to be born of a woman to teach things that any Essene all over Judea knew? Now the question is ——an audacious suggestion of De Quincey—whether or no, under the then disturbed circumstances following upon the Destruction Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, the old Essenic brotherhood reappeared as the first Christian Community. The Essenes in those days had suffered terribly in the hands of Pharisees on the score of their heresy, and at the hands of the Romans, on account of their patrio tism. They emerged out of this baptismal of fire as a new body under a new name. There is nothing strange in it. They could save themselves by such a transformation only. Every seventh day the Essenes met together and expounded the "law" among themselves in their hiding

Essenism in Christianity.

places—the son of man having no where to lay his head. "Then one takes the books, and reads", says Philo "and another of the most experienced comes forward and expounds such things as are not well-known, for most things are philosophically treated among them through symbols." From the time of Zachariah, and even of Abel, the mystical section was persecuted from city to city at the blood-stained hands of the other part (Cp. *Matt.* 23[35]). But the vast battery of persecution was let loose at or about the time of the Christian era. Israel's earthly hopes had by this time been all shattered. This is in human nature that when the outside is gone, man falls back upon his inside. As Israel gained in spirituality, spiritual Essenism got the upperhand. That is the explanation of the story of John's baptising profusely: "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans justified God being baptised with the baptism of John." At this the Pharisees and lawyers necessarily took alarm and began to persecute right and left. The cause is not far to seek. With the fall of Jerusalem the services in the Temple disappeared, and Sanhederim, the Jewish religious supreme court, ceased to exist. The Jewish nationality was endangered, and their total absorption by the heathen stared them in the face. So a strict observance of the Law was enforced and an uncompromising attitude towards all heresies increased. It is said of Paul, "entering every house and hailing men and women, he committed them to prison." They were persecuted not because they were Christians, but because they were Jews setting Mosaic laws at naught. On the other hand, "the increasingly bitter antagonism of the legal piety of the Pharisees towards Christian sectaries, and their inner conception of the Jewish faith," Drews remarks. "wholly suffice to explain not only the outburst of Messianic hope among them, but why the Christians precisely at this time—a time of the deepest humiliation and trouble—announced that the Messiah was coming immediately" as a preparatory to the mystic doctrine of Gnostics (Cp. *Isaiah* also) that he had already appeared in blood and flesh. The Jewish monotheism was antagonistic to such a Christian idea. "Had it not been for the influence of non-Jewish Eastern gnosis, assimilating Greek philosophical conceptions and heathen mythology," as Whittaker puts it, "the monotheism of Israel would have permanently withheld Christianity from the deification of its founder". (O. C. p. 115). This antagonism culminated in the final separation when the Christians sided with Rome against the Jews. This has been represented in the gospels as the antagonism between Jesus and Pharisees. However, as a result of the general disorder and dispersion closely following upon

Destruction of Jerusalem.

the destruction of Jerusalem* and the fall of the Temple the Christian Church grew :

"That great crisis unloosed ideas which had long been preparing. Most were persuaded that it was contained in the ancient scriptures of the priests that at that time the East should wax strong, and that men going forth from Judæa should possess the world. Let a rumour go forth that the true Messiah, who was to suffer and then to triumph, had already appeared and undergone that which was foretold by the prophets. Would not this gain instant credence with many ?" *Origins of Christianity*, pp 27-28.

Yes it will, argues Mr. Jocelyn Rhys :

"A rumour and some religious excitement sufficed to make such a story spread quickly, and whenever it spread it would be unhesitatingly accepted. Somebody says that somebody else has seen him who was dead alive and walking about. Some one even believes, or after conversation with some one else begins to believe, that he has seen his master or friend. As the rumour spreads it also grows. Details are added, and years after some author collects these details, adds whatever he fancies will give versimilitude to the story in which he himself believes, and publishes a biography or a gospel" (*The Ressurreciion Doctrines*, pp. 93-94).

To silence all opposition either the treatise would be fathered on some associate as is the case with the gospels or it would be too late for any contemporary to contradict. Drews observes :

"It is clear that the conversion of the mythical into the historical Jesus could not have taken place before the beginning of the second century, when there would be no living witnesses of the events related. The seventy or eighty years that would elapse after the supposed death of Jesus would be quite enough to permit his "history" to seem plausible, especially as the destruction of Jerusalem had so disturbed the life of the people that there was no fear of Jewish opponents proving the falseness of their assertions" (*Witnesses*, pp. 229).

Why did not the historian set right what was wrong ? The psychological reason comes from the ecclesiastical historian Hausrath :

"There was in ancient times hardly any interest in historical truth as such, but only in ideal truth. There are very few cases in which an ancient historian put himself the question, what had really happened and what was merely said to have happened (*Kleine Schriften*, pp. 124).

As has been indicated the reason is not far to seek. At home or abroad among the dispersed Jews in spite of its legal stringency there was always an undercurrent of secret movement that did not set great store by the observance of orthodox rituals. So this secret worship

* "It was only after the destruction of Jerusalem when the new faith spread to wider circles which did not understand the astral meaning of the Jesus-myth and regarded the myth as real history, that the knowledge of the astral features was gradually lost, and people began to seek standing ground for the story of Jesus in the real course of events." Drews' *Witnesses*, 215-216.

was not in good graces of the dominant party that carried on the Temple worship with its elaborate ceremonials, and they commanded the majority as usual. But, at the fall of the Temple, the cause of the dominant party stood discredited. Then came the opportunity of this mystical Judasim which, thus set free from the trammels of peculiar Jewish observances and commingled with Oriental Theosophy, was universalised. This gradually came to the front as Christianity. Now, as Robertson summarises (*Jesus Problem*, pp. 125-126)* from George Solomon's *The Jesus of History and the Jesus of Tradition Identified :*

"The "historical Jesus" of the seige, who is "meek" and venerated as a prophet and martyr, being combined with the "Mosaic Jesus" of Galilee, a disciple of Judas of Galilee, who resisted the Roman rule and helped to precipitate the war, is also transmuted into a myth of a sect of Jesus of Galilee, though at that time there had been no Jesuine movement. The Christian movement thus mythically grounded, grew up after the fall of the Temple", to which the Jewish Essenes and the Gentile Gnostics freely contributed men and materials—Essenism more on the ceremonial and Gnosticism on the philosophical side. Most probably the name, Jesus, and surely the communism of the early Christians were in this way supplied. Some say the Essenes, some of them at least, worshipped a mystic God Jesus from long before the Christian era, and with whose name they exorcised demons by the special *mantra* : "I abjure thee by the God of the Hebrews, Jesus," as in our country people utter the name of *Ráma* for the expulsion of evil spirits. From Jesus are derived the names Jesseans or Jessenes corrupted into Essenians, Esseans or Essenes. Jesus (Joshua, Jason, Jasios) is the name used in exorcisms by the pre-Christian Gnostic sects. This is only one form of the pre-Christian Jesus-cults of which we shall speak in detail later on (see *infra* Chap. XX). The belief in the twelve great Disciples preaching to the Whole World, evidently an astral myth, was also furnished by the Buddhist tradition together with the sign of the Cross.* Now premising that "the two chief sources of proof here [i. e. in matters of doctrine or rite] are (1) the literal translation of technical terms, or close reproduction of peculiar formulæ and dogmas, (2) a multitude of minute resemblances and analogies in matters recondite and

* "The Christian cross, it is now known, was not employed as a symbol of the faith before the days of Constantine, and was borrowed from the solar wheel of the Gaulish sun-god-worshippers who formed the mass of the successful emperor's legionaries" (Grant Allen's *Idea of God*, p. 391). "Ages before the Christian era the symbol had been mystic and sacrosanct for Semites, for Egyptians, for Greeks, for Hindus" (*Jesus Problem* p. 62).

remote" (*Vaishnavism and Christianity*, pp. 3-4), one is absolutely within one's right to hold that Christianity had freely drawn from Buddhism. "Christianity emerged from this, the higher Judaism, [meaning Essenism] and that its Bible containing the life of its Founder, its rites, dress, teachings, hierarchy, architectural buildings, councils to put down heresy, theogony and cosmogony, bear so minute a resemblance to the rites etc., of Buddhism," boldly maintains Mr. Lillie taking courage in both hands and simultaneously fighting for the historicity of Jesus, "that it seems hard to doubt that some communication existed and long continued between the two (the work cited, p. 2). "Bruckner says that Christianity has innumerable points of contact with other oriental religions and its close connection with them is an established fact" (Translator's Introduction to the *Radical Views*, p. XII). Dr. Carpenter has, in a sermon—*The Truth Spirit* (published in the *Inquirer*, June 3, 1922) said : "Christianity has done [evidently in propagation of truth] what *neither* the Stoic nor the Buddhist could do." But we would most respectfully urge on the venerable theologian that it will not do to forget what a tremendous good to the world the "Buddhist" did more than two thousand years ago by provoking, through Essenism and Gnosticism, the very Christianity he so highly speaks of to the disparagement of others. But the Doctor himself, comparing Christ with Buddha more closely later on, has found out resemblances "between the traditions of their personal incidents, the growth of their disciples' fellowship, their ethical teaching, and their missionary aims" ending in ultimately interpreting "the person of their founders by philosophical conceptions linking them with the Infinite and Eternal Source of all existence", and in presenting "salvation under the guise of participation in the Divine Nature" though "these two careers are of unequal length, with dissimilar endings" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, pp. 305-306). We can not make out why he has refrained from drawing the natural conclusion of this parallel and contrast. Why has the harvest of one year's career been exactly the same, both in quality and quantity, with that of fifty years' is not far to seek ? Buddhism being earlier was able to supply the younger movement with both matter and form. Without this conclusion Dr. Carpenter's *contrast* and *parallel* remain an enigma of history. Do not we, Indians claim to enjoy in a few years all the fruits of England's political constitution developed in a millenium and half ? Yes, because there is a historical contact and therefore there is nothing to be astonished at.

CHAPTER X

The Teacher and the Taught

a. THE TWELVE*

Let us take the *taught* first. The twelve apostles were meant to be, according to Strauss, "a narrower circle of disciples, who remained continually in his society, were initiated by him into his thoughts more profoundly than the masses of the people were, and were penetrated by his spirit. It was as customary for the Hebrew Prophets, and at a later period for the Rabbis, to have smaller circles of disciples round their persons, as it was for the Greek philosophers." If so, the first object was never realised, as it is a notorious fact that Jesus' immediate followers contributed precious little to the upbuilding of the movement showing the much trumpeted selection of these apostles to be more mythical than real. They in a body deserted; if one remained, he remained only to deny the Master. If this desertion and denial by the apostles indicate anything, they indicate their own non-historical character. Moreover, they indicate that the apostles had nothing to do with Jesus as an actual fact of his life. They are an imaginary part of an imaginary drama. The other object must, of course, have been necessarily an accomplished fact. In a manufactured character the attendant circumstances of the precedents must be scrupulously reproduced in details. So Jesus was given an inner coterie of twelve disciples in imitation of Prophets and Philosophers of old as Strauss has pointed out. And a mere imitation it is. We know the *Seventy* of *Luke* is a fiction, why not the twelve also? "The Twelve Apostles too, are to me (and I should think to many critics) as unhistorical as the Seventy disciples." (*Hibbert Journal*, 1911, p. 891), so says Professor K. Cheyne, the joint Editor of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica.* Dr. Carpenter also takes the *Seventy* to be mythical. According to him "the Seventy Disciples were thus symbol of the appeal of Christianity to the whole world" (*First Three Gospels*, p. 271). When the mission of the Seventy evidently manufactured by a pro-Gentile hand can be so

Apostles fictitious.

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* The number twelve is romantic, so to say. Not only twelve tribes of Israel, there are twelve Patriarchs, pre-Christian twelve Apostles, pre-Christian twelve brethren of the Lord to participate in some secret sacrament, the twelve gates and twelve angels of the Apocalypse.

easily disposed of as a symbol or allegory about the Gentile nations even when charged with the self-same appeal as the mission of the Twelve, what obstacle is there to take the mission of the Twelve itself as such a symbol for the appeal to the twelve tribes of Israel conceived by a pro-Judaic scribe? If the seventy persons with their names could be invented to serve the purpose of some allegory and made the part of the story later on, "where is the improbability of an earlier and similar grafting-on of a myth of Twelve Apostles? That it *could* be done is clear, and", argues Mr. Robertson in his *Christianity and Mythology* (p. 347) "there remains nothing but to accept the clear proof that it was." Now let us see how it was done.

The obvious question that forces itself on us is that disciples are meant for receiving instructions on certain subjects and then called upon to propagate the same. By analysing what Jesus taught his disciples, we get, first the casting of devils and next, the parables of which the meaning is purposely hidden from the people in general. Thaumaturgy was the universal feature of the ancient world for which the ushering in of a new kingdom of God in such hot haste was quite uncalled for; and no apostles were required for the teaching of parables of which the meaning could not be passed on to others. Jesus' association with the *twelve* has no foundation in fact and the myth-makers did not care to make it even plausible. The fictitious character is writ large so prominently on the forehead of the selection of the twelve apostles that much thought is not needed to detect the motive thereof. The episode was at the first instance added to give the kingdom an air of possessing an evangel. As there had been preachers, there must have been *something* to preach! This is the logic that is to be swallowed by us because: "Thus saith the Lord." "All careful investigators have been perplexed by the manner of the introduction of "the Twelve" in the gospels, and they would have been still more so," continues Mr. Robertson, "if they had realised the total absence of any reason in the texts for the creation of disciples or apostles at all. Disciples to learn —what? Apostles to teach—what? The choosing is as plainly mythical as the function" (*The Jesus Problem* p. 126). If we compare the gospels it becomes conspicuous that the "choosing" was motivated by some ultra-historical preconceived notion—the choosing was for choosing's sake. Psychology is trampled under foot; as if by a divine decree, without the least pretence of previous instruction whatsoever, the fisherman left fishing and the taxgatherer deserted his calling at the fiat: "Follow me." Strauss, too, could not swallow what the gospels say in this connection as the particular occasions on which

they state this to have happened, have so obviously their origin in legend or free invention. We begin with three, four or five, the quasi-sacred Old Testament numbers, but without the connective development, the full contingent of twelve is summarily reached at one stroke. The redactor in *Mark* could not conceal the fact that he was constructing a myth in order to bring about a reconciliation with *Matthew.* How summary is the procedure! *Mark* says : "And he goeth up into the mountain* and calleth unto him whom he himself would: and they went unto him. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach and to have authority to cast out devils."

Gospel account betrays fictitiousness.

But, in *Luke* who begins with three, the list of the twelve is different. In this connection the evangelist did not resist the temptation of introducing a miracle. To these superstitious scribes the (his) story is stale without supernatural happenings. In *Matthew* and *Mark* the beginning is made with four to whom the fifth is added. John is cleverer. He more supernaturally gets up the five at once taking two from John the Baptist's followers and most skillfully manages his *twelve* without any ado about finding out the necessary men: "Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you a devil?" As to the reference to "the twelve" in the Pauline epistle (1 *Cor.* 15[5]) Dr. Drews observes: "Since the work of Holsten (*Des Paulus*), however, it has been an open secret in the theological world that "the twelve" is a later interpolation in original text. The theologian Brandt ((*Des Christentums)* also regards "the twelve" as a very unsafe part of the Pauline text and believes it to be a "later addition"; and Seufert (*Des Apostalatus)* is convinced that it is possibly a very early gloss which was inserted in the text in order to support with the authority of the apostle Paul later idea of twelve apostles" (*Witnesses,* p. 76-77.) The conclusion is inevitable that the gospellers were under some obligations to mention the *twelve* and that the obligations were not historical. They were labouring under a preconception and in obedience to that they were creating a fiction. These apostles are

* This, "the mountain", allies the episode with the astral myth—the twelve apostles are twelve signs of the zodiac. In *Luke* where, too, the referernce to the *mountain* is found, Jesus said to his disciples that he gave them power over *serpents* and *scorpions.* This is clear enough reference to heaven—the astral *mountain* where serpents and scorpions abound, but Jesus dispels all doubts from sceptical minds by saying : "Rejoice because your name is written in heaven," thereby alloting one house to each apostle—twelve to twelve. Jesus, "the Lamb", also evidently indicates some zodiacal reference.

unnecessary for any apostolic purpose and they knew it. One betrayed, another denied and the rest selpt on when Jessus was passing through the most critical period of his life. In the *Acts* Matthew is chosen to fill up the place that fell vacant at the death of Judas, but this is mentioned no where else and Matthew plays no part in the subsequent narrative. Only a gospel was subsequently foisted on him. There is no actual trace of the active twelve in the epistles. Can there be any more effective material nullification of those whose formal choice by hook or crook has been made a special duty? Curiously enough we find a Talmudic Jesus Ben-Stada with five followers whose names correspond with those of some disciples. So all candid critics will agree with Mr. Robertson that "the calling of the twelve has been *imposed upon* an earlier narrative, with an arbitrary list, which is later varied. The calling of the fisherman to begin with, is a symbolical act, as is the calling of a tax-gatherer. The calling of the twelve is a more complicated matter." And for this reason, next to the miracles, the gospel-list of the *twelve* is the most damaging item to the biographical school. The detail is wanting at the very point where the detail is most wanted. A list of names is supplied, most of which have no bearing with the subsequent history, as we have already pointed out. We have therefore conflicting unhistorical detail of five, no detail of the further additions and then suddenly a body of twelve is constituted (for all these details see *The Jesus Problem*, pp. 126, 128).

Origin of the *twelve* pre-Christian.

Of course, the starting point of the twelve is to be found in the pre-Christian Jesus-cult of Palestine. In that cult there was scrificial rite in which twelve persons called the "Brethren of the Lord" participated.* But the above are minor considerations when compared with the real cause of the *twelve* story. The reason lies buried in the *Teaching (Didáchê) of the Twelve Apostles* discovered by Philotheos Bryennios, Metropolitan of Nicomedia (then of Serris) in 1873, in the library attached to the Monastary of the Most Holy Sepulchre, in the Phanar or Greek quarter, of Constantinople. The book was originally the scripture of a pre-Christian Jesus-cult among the Jews and proselytes, meaning to be the creed of the actual twelve "apostles" of the High Priest

* James is called "the brother of the Lord." This has been much made of by prepossessed theologians in favour of historicity as here is a reference to a blood relation of Jesus. In *Matt.* 12⁴⁶, *Mk.* 3³¹, *Lk.* 8¹⁹ brother means a spiritual brother—brother in faith, so it has only a symbolical significance. Origen long ago in his *Contra Celsum* opined that James was called so because he was virtuous and faithful.

before the fall of Jerusalem, or of the Patriarch after the catastrophe. The High Priest and the Patriarch of Tiberias after him appointed twelve tax-collectors and they were called apostles. But when the dispersed Jews multiplied, the number of collectors necessarily increased. So there were appointed seventy-two under-collectors who released the *twelve* from the drudgery of actual collection and who were turned by the third gospel into men and materials for its supplementary mythical disciples. The *twelve* were then left with the teaching and legislative function only. So the foundation was laid of a purely Jewish ethics ending in the well organised code of morals called the *Teachings of the Twelve Apostles*. This *Didáchê* also supplied much materials for the Sermon on the Mount.* On this was grafted the nascent cult of Jesus the Servant of God (vide S. H. C. pp. 17, 65-66). In this cult prominence was given to the sacrificial banquet and baptism. Both these rituals were pre-Christian, and practised by the Jews and their proselytes. They perhaps formed a secret society who persuaded themselves that the Messiah had already come. Verily, the expectation of the coming of such a Messiah was universal among the Jews, and it was very keen at the time. If the ball of the fruition of this expectation were set rolling from any quarter there would be every chance of its being accepted as a gospel-truth, as it were. The historic existence of this body is undisputed. The Biographist A. Seeberg acknowledges it to have been known to Jesus and the Baptist. The early Church which in one aspect is most likely the continuation

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* *e, g.* "Bless them that curse you, and pray for your enemies and fast for them that persecute you, for, what thanks (have ye) if ye love them that love you? Do not the foreigners [the emendation "tax collectors" in *Matt.* 5^{40} has a hidden logic of its own. Villify him to whom you are indebted] : do the same. But love ye them that hate you." The apostles or the tax-collectors of the High Priest carried this manual in their pockets for the teaching of the Jews dispersed throughout the length and breadth of the Empire. This was a virtue of necessity. In the age of defeat and oppression the Jews learnt in the hard school of experience the vanity of the ethic of hate ; and the Bible incorporated the teaching, though we do not find the virtue of forgiveness practised either by Jesus or his followers. It is yet some consolation to the followers of the Christ that the doctrine was framed sometime earlier by *his* race. The *Didáachê* also teaches : "If any one ask from thee what is thine ask it not back, for indeed thou canst not." If *Matthew* has omitted this, it has been done with a purpose. This could not possibly be a Christian exhortation. This is not a moral precept either. As a piece of social ethic this is almost ridiculous. But it was the actual lot of the expatriated Jews to bear with meekness for which there was no legal remedy in the Roman Empire. And the gospels were written when the Christians were enjoying the patronage of Rome.

of the cult-body used the book profusely with additions and alterations to adapt it to its own purpose. When the new cult was on the point of superseding and strong enough to displace the old, it did not miss the opportunity to provide itself with the same fighting instruments. It is no wonder that the early Jesuist movement with the document in its hands would make an attempt to appropriate the credit of the *Teaching* to itself. And the surest way was to manufacture a list of twelve apostles as its preachers to appropriate the credit of the teachings. That is the motive for the invention of the *twelve* story. But when the Church progressed, mainly among the Gentile this still unduly Judaic document being found unsuitable in many respects, fell into desuetude but the myth of the Twelve continued. All evidences, internal and external, point to this one conclusion and there can not come any reasonable contradiction to this theory from any quarter.

b. What Jesus Taught

Gospel no account of Jewish Messiah.

Jesus as the Teacher (Part I) is a figure wholly fabricated from ancient scriptures. Jesus, the Saviour-God is the development of similar pre-Christian cults to be worked out hereafter (Part III); Jesus, as a Messiah (Part II) though without any assignable mission properly so called, is the Gentilisation of a Jewish idea finally abandoned by the Jews after the fall of the Temple. The biographical school make a tissue of the three with the addition of the doctrine of salvation by blood-sacrifice,—a legacy from the savage state of primitive humanity. The latest documentary analysis has left nothing to Jesus but a doctrine of last things, an eschatology, a coming riding the chariot of the clouds—unfortunately it has not been fulfilled. It was really a vision of a visionary, the vision of a man "in fact insane" as both Harnack and Loisy agree to call him (E. D., p. xv), a dream of a dreamer without any practical message to deliver to his people. Of course, it is not unlikely that there was some political message by some martyr, but that was wholly suppressed for some ostensible practical purpose. That purpose was to keep the Romans in good humour. When Christianity took a documentary shape, the Christians were already pro-Romans openly separated from their Jewish compatriots. This explains the wholly absurd attitude of the gospels towards the Jews. In the final struggle of the Jews against Rome the Christians sided with the latter. So the political message, the only probable practical message of the Jewish Messiah, we miss and that necessarily, because the documents were manufactured in the pro-Roman

surroundings. The reason of schism is not far to seek. The Jews by this time discarded Jesus as the promised Messiah. The influence of a prophet is based on the belief of his infallibility. If that is gone, his following falls off and the cause is ruined. As the prophecy of the Messiah's coming to establish the Jewish Kingdom during that generation, as predicted, did not materialise to their expectation, the Jews turned hostile to the movement. The Gándhi movement gives us the most up-to-date illustration of this truth. In a couple of years the Mahátmá has been declared a heretic, and besides, in a public meeting, a proposal to lynch him has been actually made. It is a historical fact that from time to time till the destruction of Jerusalem or even a little after, many fanatical Jews, some of them bearing the name, Jesus, and claiming to be the Messiah, came out openly or secretly to restore the lost Jewish state. For, as in India, in order to avoid an impoverishing system of taxation and the suppression of the national aspiration, the subject peoples for want of any room for collective action, were gradually goaded to form secret associations who readily believed in the speedy end of the old order which promised in some way to bring about a new life.

Josephus silent.

By the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37—100 A) no reference to the gospel Jesus is made in his three great works on (1) the history of the Jews, (2) the history of the last Jewish war and (3) a defence of the Jewish religion. Only a single passage rejected as interpolatory is found. The passage was not known to Origen. "The theory of utter spuriousness" of Josephus's testimony to Jesus is upheld by such as eminent authority as Dr. Emil Schurer in *A History of the Jewish people*, DIV. I, vol. ii, p. 147-149. Robertson (J. P., p. 122) calls it "the most obvious interpolation in all literature." According to Couchoud, it is "a clumsy interpolation" because "never was patchwork sewn with more obvious thread" (*The Enigma of Jesus*, pp. 20-21). Prof. Smith takes this "*silence of Josephus*" as an insuperable obstacle in the way of believing the gospel story. (See *supra* p. 10). But the historian Josephus neverthless speaks of two other Jesuses—one predicted "woe to Jerusalem," was flogged, being meek never retaliated, and was finally killed by a stone in the siege, and afterwards venerated as a prophet and martyr. The other Jesus, son of Sapphias, the Chief Magistrate of Tiberias and violent political opponent of Josephus, with a following of sailors and poor people, among whom were two, named Simon and John, is said to have been the disciple of Judas the Gaulanite or Galilean, eventually identified with one who created some anti-Roman trouble and died

Many Jesuses.

under Pontius Pilate. There was another Jesus, a robber captain of the borders of Ptolamais who was betrayed and whose companions deserted him. But by some the latter has been confounded with the former (*Jesus Problem*, p. 125). Instances of many more Jesuses could be cited, but it is not required. Myths are multifocal. It would not stand in the way of any myth-theory if traits of any or other of these Jesuses were subsequently incorporated with the central myth of crucifixion for further development. At best, Jesus, if microscopically historical in minor matters, began with a propaganda subversive of the Roman rule and met a violent death consequently. Now, as already indicated, at some later period finding in him, on the one hand a Messiah of the ordinary Jewish type and, on the other, a rebel *Mádhi* put to death by the Romans, the writers connected with the movement, mostly non-Jewish and pro-Roman into the bargain, threw him overboard. They suppressed the fact of the political mission altogether in order to conciliate the Roman opinion and offered instead a universal and wholly denationalised Jew who, a proclaimer of a purely spiritual kingdom, was eventually put to death at the instigation of the Jewish priestcraft. This latter is the manufactured Jesus of the gospels who differs in all respects from his supposed historical prototypes. They have nothing in common except the name. The Jews were now necessarily alienated. They put in their own Messiah and the secession was complete during the great rebellion under Hadrian. The leader of the revolt was Barcasiba whom R. Akiba, the most celebrated doctor of the law in his time, is said to have distinctly announced as the Messiah. Messiahs were as plentiful as blackberries in autumn, because of the people's will to believe in a Messiah and their determination to have one. "As in the time of Vaspasian, so also at this time there was a widespread idea that the day had come when the old prophecy of the prophets would be fulfilled, and Israel would cast off the yoke of the Gentile. The Christian legends also declare that Barcasiba bewitched the people by deceitful miracles. [Of course, the Jews were not slow to return the compliment] Just by reason of the Messianic character of the movement it was quite impossible for Christians to take part in it. They could not deny their own Messiah by recognising the leader of the political revolution as such. Hence they were persecuted with peculiar violence by the new Messiah, as Justin Martyr and Eusebius testify." (Schurer, p. 300). Because of this schism the real political Messiah got out of the hand of the gospel writers. But they were earnestly in

Barcasiba as Messiah.

search of the central figure for developing the Jesus-cult then prevalent in the Roman world, and they found one in their manufactured Jesus. Now the real tragedy began. The true message they had to suppress, but they could not supply anything in its place. So, as a result, we find that Jesus preached *nothing.* As there was no message, there were no missionaries. If we combine all the gospels, we find that the apostles were sent out to cast out devils, heal the sick and preach that men should repent and that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. To begin with, they should not pay any visit to Samaritans or Gentiles as evidently there was no room for them in the kingdom—the Twelve ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. The Gentile world was not at all in contemplation when the myth was given its first start. But the Gentilisation could not be prevented, and Luke consequently invented 70* or 72 preaching disciples into which number, according to a Jewish tradition, mankind was divided. Dr. Carpenter (F. Th. G. p. 271) takes it to be "an allegory of the preaching to the Gentiles." So it is an invention pure and simple. Robertson concludes: "Whether the gospel myth be thus based, or framed merely on the theocratic basis of seventy or seventy-two nations, myth it certainly is (*Christianity and Mythology*, p. 347). This shows, there was nothing, absolutely nothing new to preach, though with a great deal of flourish the apostolic mission was introduced in the gospels. It was a void evangel the fictitious apostles were charged with. It may be argued that the idea of the Kingdom of God was so well known that no specification was necessary. And John the Baptist already preached it with renewed vigour. Now if the mission of Jesus was only a new edition, rather a reprint of that of the Baptist, wherein does then lie the supersession of the latter by the former? Was it not to give prominence to this theme the Baptist episode was ushered in? If the idea of the Kingdom were the old Pharisaic idea (*vide the Pharisees* by R. Travers Herford) what becomes of the pouring of the new wine into the old bottle? Yet against all records and against himself Herford has tried to claim something more for Jesus. "It is true that John the Baptist had come and gone, and Jesus at the outset took up his message (*Mark 1*[14]). But Jesus was far other than a second John" (p. 201) It is simply a dogmatic assertion which has no basis in facts. At least no one has ever shown it. To even an unreflecting mind it is evident that the gospel-writers were telling a tale when they had

Jesus had no Evangel.

* "The seventy disciples remind us of the seventy elders chosen by Moses to assist him" (Strauss). There were 70 members in the Sanhedrin also.

nothing to tell; so they had to concoct a story by inserting an empty framework in an empty past. The experience of the disciples, as far as their mission tour is concerned, is equally without any moral significance or historical import for the evangel of the kingdom. They reported that all they had done consisted in successful exorcism and nothing else.* We hear very often of the Kingdom of God, but its nature is never explained in unequivocal terms. We have certain parables and parables are allegories bearing a dozen interpretations. They were designed, we have the authority of Jesus, to make the meaning of the Kingdom unintelligible to the multitude,—those for whom only it could have been meant. A preacher preaches for the edification of those to whom his message is delivered. This is the ordinary mode of preaching. But the preacher of the Kingdom hid his message when delivering it, and he said he did so deliberately. The disciples protested against this method, because they themselves could not understand the meaning of the message So an explanation was vouchsafed unto them in private. This is a quiet hint as to the esoteric character of Jesus' mission like Essenism with which some have identified it, thereby denying the necessity of any such mission. These parables are the only explanations offered of this cryptic kingdom and they have been purposely made incomprehensible. The disciples could not understand them, and moreover they were forbidden to enlighten the public on the subject It amounts to this that Jesus withheld the explanation of the very thing which he sent his disciples to explain to the public (vide *The Historical Jesus*). The introduction of the parables is a stratagem, having recourse to which the gospellers succeeded in writing their treatises, but at the same time they cleverly concealed the fact that they had no evangel to describe. This is, in plain logic, the gospellers' roundabout way of proclaiming from the housetop to the discerning mind that there was no preacher of the Kingdom of God, and consequently this non-existent preacher had nothing to preach.

The mythical character of Jesus' relation with the so-called disciples is proved to the hilt by their wholesale desertion at a most critical period of his life. If they took him to be the God's anointed, "The

* That the episode is an interpolation is given out by the texts themselves. *Matthew* sends out the Twelve, rather makes a proposal to that effect, but they do not stir out—the narrative continuing in their presence. In *Mark* and *Luke* they go and return but make no report. Evidently the mission was a heedless addition to some older gospel or gospels (vide the *Jesus Problem*). In reference to the mission of the Twelve apostles even Strauss is of opinion that "we see reason to doubt that they were sent forth in the lifetime of Jesus."

Son of the living God" as Peter so triumphantly declared (*Matt.* 16[16]), it would be simply absurd on their part—impossible to a degree—to flee from him or to deny him. This declaration is attested by the divine voice at baptism* in the Jordon, viz, "Thou art my beloved Son" (*LK.* 3[22]). It is also ratified on the mount at transfiguration† : "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him" (*Matt.* 17[5]). No miracle more miraculous happened after the crucifixion. And this was done in spite of the Master's warning in so many words a short while ago that all these things would happen in obedience to prophecies. Jesus urged on them : (*Mt.* 10[18-19]) "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem ; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes : and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify ; and the third day he shall be raised." Cp. *Mk.* 10[33-34] and *Lk.* 18[31-33]. Can this be a fact of history that the disciples, if they existed at all, would play fast and loose with their own confession, would play false to the divine voice they heard with their own ears, or would not care a brass farthing for what the "only begotten Son of God" urged upon them while they were following him like "shadows" for so many years or months together ? This unpsychological drama was possible only as a fiction originally designed for the consumption of a truly religious but fanatically disposed people, out of some misunderstood and misapplied prophecies. To ask us to believe this as *gospel*-truth is a very large demand on human credulity. Or, on the other hand, if the disciples really existed. Jesus made precious little impression on them. Then, what is the necessity of placing such a non-entity at the fountain head of a mighty movement ? Instead of explaining the movement the career of Jesus is a stumbling block in its way. "We must dismiss him," emphatically asserts Dr. Couchoud, "for he can serve for nothing. His shoulders are too weak to support the Christian edifice" (Work cited, p. 87).

Disciples' behaviour inexplicable from Biblical accounts.

Jesus a non-entity.

It bears a repetition here that the gospels are replete with such misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the Old Testament texts as in the case of the Virgin birth or the riding of the two asses. The latter leads to a ludicrous portrayal of the Messiah. Prophecies, or

* John the Baptist forthwith recognises him. "I have need to be baptised of thee and comest thou to me ?"—(*Mt.* 3[14]).

† This is no subjective conception, nor even a private communication from one person to another, but a public declaration for the whole world.

correctly speaking, what were taken to be prophecies, were all utilized in this way. In *Micah* 5², Bethlehem has been referred to in connection with an event of the time, but it has been misconstrued into a prediction about the Messiah's birth-place ; *Matthew's* quotation (2⁶) does not even tally with the original. But by hook or crook Bethlehem has been forced into the drama and therefore many futile subterfuges have been attempted to reconcile the claims of Nazareth and Bethlehem. Some of these sayings a millenium old have been requistioned by the gospel-writers to impose upon the unwary and ignorant among whom the gospel was first promulgated. Justin in his *Dialogues with the Jew Trypho* has carried this art of misapplying the prophecies to a most ridiculous length. During the *Swadeshi* agitation of Bengal at about 1905, the present writer was persistently asked to accept on trust that the *Kalki* who would make havoc of the *Mlechhas* had already incarnated and been working 'in our midst' just seeking an opportunity to make himself known. But, according to many, the last *avatár* had manifested himself several centuries hence. In both the cases the birth place, parentage etc. agreed in details with the verdict of the *S'ástras*. Many believed in this latter canard and it was spread far and wide to help the anti-British propaganda. The logic is this : Somebody is taken to be the Messiah, or a Messiah is manufactured, and the fulfilment in him of all the predictions or traditions about the Messiah becomes a foregone conclusion. For example, a writer through ignorance takes a Hebrew word meaning simply "the young woman" for "an unmarried woman," So when writing the life of the Messiah he declares that the Messiah was necessarily born of a virgin,* and angels are not wanting to bear witness to this supreme historical fact ! This is the basic principle on which the life of Jesus Christ was built by the Evangelists. Now the trick has been exposed and the plea of the historicity of the gospels is to be abandoned altogether. Dr Carpenter notes : "The whole career of Jesus from birth to death was cast into this frame." But he pleases to add the phrase "by degrees" (F.Th.G., p. 45) whereas he should have said "from its very inception". If there were any truth anywhere in the incidents of Jesus's life it could not be thrust wholesale into this imaginary frame. The square screw does not fit in with a round hole. Dr. Carpenter does not see

Prophecies the basis of fabrication.

* The mistake was started by the Septuagint. Raja Ram Mohan Roy shows how by rendering a definite article in Hebrew into an indefinite, the Greek version gives the contemporary event an appearance of a prediction. The whole history of such sham prophecies has been exposed by the Rájarshi in his *Three Appeals to the Christian Public.* In this particular case he shows the *Virgin* to be figurative of the city, *the daughter of Zion* (see *infra* Chap. xviii a).

the significance of his own finding because he is led astray by his prepossession. He is blinded by his previous *karma.* Otherwise, how can he write the following, and yet take the gospel-Jesus for an historical person? "The whole biography of the Christ then, from birth to death, the scene of his labours, the scope of his power, the method of his teaching [which teaching itself is more than proved to be a compilation], the reception of his message, the hour of welcome and the day of doom, *was written beforehand in the scriptures* [Italics are ours] for those who held the key to their mysteries. It was only necessary to put the passages together, and the incidents followed in due course. The frame-work of the wondrous story was prepared beforehand, the lines of the Messiah's life were shaped ; the great acts of the drama were laid out already, even the detail fell into the prescribed order; and prophecy thus not only became the standard by which the claims of the Christ might be tested, it generated the very occurrences which satisfied its own demands.' (Ibid pp. 312-13). Dr. Carpenter has reverted to the subject at the end of his *Comparative Religion.* How one wishes that in this comprehensive treatise where all religions have been almost impartially surveyed, the scales had fallen from his eyes! But that is expecting too much.

Myths also—as to dates.

And the frame rests not only on misapprehended prophesies. Its base is mythical as well. We find Jesus at the time of his death at the head of a large number of devoted followers who followed him through thick and thin so long he led them, and his alleged father, mother, brethren and relatives were all living. Yet even his birth-year could not be settled. One fixed afterwards was found wrong. And it would have been found wrong wherever fixed. In the 6th century it was decided from the third chapter of *Luke* that Jesus was born in the year 754 A. U. C. Later on it was noticed that according to *Matthew* the birth date could not have been later than 5 B. C. *Luke's* first chapter places it on 3 B. C. at the latest, but according to his second chapter 6 A. D. was the very earliest possible date. But in order to bring the birth date within the lifetime of Herod, though that also does not obviate all difficulties, 4 B. C. has been selected, i. e. Jesus was born four years before his birth (*Literary Guide,* Feb., 1925). Jesus' biography is founded on such authentic records! When the birth-date was finally fixed at 25th December, it was found to be the birthday of the mythical Sun-God. No trace of his is found from the age of twelve to thirty—verily a mythological period. What about the duration of his ministry? Why, whenever a point most necessary in a biography is required, most assuredly you do not expect

to find it. So the period ranges from one year to twenty. With so much trumpet twelve disciples have been introduced to uphold the cause and they are said to have died for Jesus, but none of them left any record on this very important point. So the Church had no other alternative than to accept the tradition of "the acceptable year of the Lord"* *i. e.* it lasted exactly one year *viz.*, the period the sun requires to course through the sky traversing the twelve signs of the zodiac. Now when crucifixion day was to be fixed another sun-myth was requisitioned. All know that the Good Friday varies from year to year to conform to some astronomical principle which the Jews adopted from the Sun-worshippers for their Passover. And the sun-myth was the most popular cult at the time (*vide* S. H. C. pp. 14-15). Between these mythical points was placed the prophetic frame and to this was added the full grown teacher manufactured out of old materials stored up in ancient lore. The ascription of the sermon to the Christ on the mount is as historical as the Gita to S'ree Krishna on the chariot of Arjuna in the battle-field of Kurukshetra. Both serve a dramatic purpose. The God is a Teacher and he must be made to teach his disciples with certain amount of show.

The net result we have achieved in this Part is that the Christ was made from materials lying handy around the Christ-makers. And it is quite natural. If men made their Gods from age to age why not their Christs? So Mr. Robertson hits the nail right on the head when he remarks: "The Christist cult gained ground not because there was anything new either in its dogma or in its promise, but on the contrary because these were so closely parallelled in many pagan cults: its growth was in fact by way of assimilation of new details from these. Step by step it is seen to have adopted the mysteries, the miracles, and the myths of the popular Gentile religions". (S. H. C. p. 36). Then concludes this eminent authority: "Those who look upon the historic flood in the broad and peopled plain are slow to conceive that it had its rise in the minute rills and random brooks of a far off mountain land. *But it is so that the great rivers begin.*" (Ibid p. 40). The italics are ours.

Conclusion

"From his independent standpoint he [Pierson] no longer needed to interpret the Scriptures in accordance with either orthodox or modern dogmas and he denied the **historical existence** of the **teacher** Jesus of Nazareth" (R. V., p. 56). All scholars worth the name say, *amen.*

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* *Cp.* Sunday, the Lord's day. The professors of the religion kept the first day of the week as the day sacred to their Sun-God *i. e.* Mithra (*vide* Pfleiderer's *Primitive Christianity*, Vol. iv. p. 419 f. n.)

Part II.

JESUS THE MESSIAH

CHAPTER XI

SOURCES OF NEW TESTAMENT

a. History of Biblical Criticism

Before we proceed we had better make a *resume* of where the criticism of the Bible stands to day, and what has been its net result up-to-date. The pruning of the Bible, without questioning its historicity, began with Rájá Rámmohun Rôy just a full century ago. But the Rájá's conception of history, indeed quite original, was wholly missed by his followers in the Bráhma Samáj who falsely assumed that they received inspiration from the Bible as if from the contact of a living personality contrasted with the teachings of *dead* Scriptures as found elsewhere. But, I suppose, new generation has since sprung up that knew no Joseph. However, after Rámmohun came Strauss and Renan. As modern scholarship moves in the track of centuries the authority of to-day is only the heretic of yesterday. So moderate scholars now-a-days would hail them as saviours, though the fanaticism of those days hurled ban and anathema on their devoted heads. "In the case of Strauss, who," Schweitzer observes, "as a young man of twenty-seven, cast the offence openly in the face of the world, the woe fulfilled itself. His Life of Jesus was his ruin." (*The Quest*. p. 5). We shall pursue the thread a little further up. But the surface only can be explored.

Rámmohun Rôy.

M. Loisy (*Jesus et la tradition ; Apropos d' historie der religion* etc.), an advanced representative of the liberal view, falling in with the Unitarians and fighting for historicity, however insignificant its quantity may be, is a little impatient of other critics. He has cut down the historicity to the tenth part, though he thinks that part inviolable. But a change has come upon him (*Revue Critique*, 1923, p. 402). "In viewing the gospels as liturgic prophetic writings, he appears to ignore their historical character, and so makes an important concession to the mythologists" (Goguel in the *Harvard Theological Review*, April, 1926, p. 117 f. n.) Prof. Schmiedel (*Jesus in Modern Criticism ; Johannine Writings, Ency. Biblica* etc.) is far

Loisy.

more advanced and very liberal. He is conscious that the ground is clear for the myth-theory but holds fast to historicity. He thinks (p. 135), all the same, that religion will not suffer without a historical Jesus. This is the result of 80 years' strenuous efforts to maintain historicity. The authority of to-day was a *bête noire* of our grandfather's day.

Schmiedel.

Bolingbroke's friends discussed and privately denied historicity. But the first public attack came from Dupuis and Volney on the grounds of astronomical myth-theory and myth analogies with pagan religions. They lacked investigation on the Jewish side of the problem. They failed to make any impression, as the free-thinking critics such as Reimarus and Voltaire accepted historicity, though the former were sound as far as they went. In 1799 an anonymous German writer showed that the life of Jesus was pre-conceived in the Jewish myth and speculation, but he too made no impression because of a counter-movement rationalising myths and miracles as natural events misunderstood.

Dupuis and Volney.

Reimarus and Voltaire.

Then came Strauss who, first to handle the problem with scientific thoroughness retaining the sub-stratum of historicity, was ostracised, though to-day taken to be the saviour of the situation. Strauss developed with great power and precision the theory that the gospel narrative is mostly a myth-construction from Jewish prophecy and dogma. Renan's book is considered by scientific critics to be a *Romance* only.

Strauss.

Renan.

On the German side Dr. Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historic Jesus* (1906) gives us the result from Reimarus to Wrede. In 1907, Canon Sanday rushed to the print to unreservedly avow his faith in Schweitzer's conclusions (*The Life of Christ in Recent Research*) but repented his rashness four years later (*Hibbert journal*, 1911). Wrede shows that the Messiahship is a creation following upon the belief in the resurrection. For him Jesus is simply a Teacher. Schweitzer shows that the teaching Jesus is a documentary construction. If Jesus is not a Messiah the Gospel story crumbles to pieces. That is, between themselves they destroy the whole edifice. This is Dr. Schweitzer and he is an honourable man, i. e., a believer in the historicity. How difficult it is to be divested of one's early impressions ! Because Schweitzer and Wrede have destroyed Gospel-history more than any advocate of the myth theory.

Schweitzer and Wrede.

Recently Dr. Drews in his *Christ-myth and Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*, has shown, with a formidable display of facts and figures, that there is no witness to the historicity. On the contrary, all the sacred literature bears witness to the myth-theory. On the Dutch side Van Baur destroyed all Epistles except four. Bruno Bauer, the German, while in search of historicity, found no standing ground and destroyed all the Epistles and New Testament writings. Van Manen's criticism of the Epistles is the masterpiece on the subject showing the spuriousness of the Pauline Epistles. *The Radical Views* about the New Testament of Van Eysinga clears the ground for the myth-theory for which many stray attempts have already been made.

Drews, Dutch Baur, German Bauer, Eysinga.

In England where Lyell could only in privacy avow his views as to the antiquity of man and Sir James Frazer, the great master of mytho-anthropological lore, refused to apply to the history of the Christian cult his generalisation that ritual precedes myth for fear of destroying the historicity, was anonymously published between 1841—1849, "The Existence of Christ Disproved by Irresistible Evidence in a Series of Letters by a German Jew." Myth-theory here proposed in analogy to pagan myths has been developed in a masterly way by Prof. W. B. Smith in his *Ecce Deus*; *Der vor. Jesus* etc. He has shown that all the Bible stories are allegories.

Lyell, Frazer W. B Smith, Whittaker.

Thomas Whittaker embodying the findings of Van Manen in his *Origins of Christianity* has, with the help of his predecessors, especially of Robertson, reached the mythical conclusions. From his book it will appear that few are aware how little of what is asserted as to the sources or beginnings of Christianity is matter of historic knowledge. Mr. McCabe in his *Sources of the Morality of the Gospels and The Parables of the Gospel and the Talmud*, though a believer in the historicity, has destroyed all claims of originality for Christ—there is not a single fact or teaching but borrowed from elsewhere. Then Mr. Robertson in his *Christianity and Mythology*; *Pagan Christs*; *A Short History of Christianity*; *The Historical Jesus*, *The Jesus Problem* etc., especially in the last mentioned two, has conclusively shown that in the myth-theory lies the solution of all the enigmas of the gospel narrative. In the *Historical Jesus* Mr. Robertson has given a brilliant review of the whole position as to the historicity of Jesus with searching criticisms of the attitude of many advanced theologians such as Loisy, Schmeidel and others. He might have saved us the criticism of

Mc.Cabe.

Robertson.

Rev. Thorborn who to support virgin birth has fallen back upon parthenogenesis. In the *Jesus Problem* he has, in a compendious form, given his myth-theory, after showing the failure of all the attempts to find a historical basis. The result is a new colligated view of the entire theory.

All the supporters of the myth-theory have come to the same conclusion starting independently from different standpoints, while seeking the basis of historicity (Vide Robertson's *Historical Jesus and Jesus Problem*; also the Introduction to Strauss's *Life of Jesus* by Otto Pfleiderer.

b. Method of Procedure.

The orthodox trim their sail according to the wind that blows. "What was then revolutionary heresy" opines Mr. Robertson in his *Historical Jesus*, "is now become a very respectable form of professional theology" (p. 192). The Church will fain march to-day under the banner of the most accursed of the last century. So, M. Loisy, the most scholarly champion with Prof. Schmiedel, of the historicity of the gospel-Jesus, would gladly put on the mantle of Strauss "who resolves into myth at least nine-tenths of the gospel narratives finding them mere inventions to fulfil supposed Old Testament predictions." (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 26). "Brandt with others latterly also suspected some of the gospel stories as being formed upon Old Testament motives from beginning to end" (Ibid p. 44). Like the proverbial drowning man's straw the defenders would catch at anything that, they think, would serve their purpose, The legend of the empty tomb and Jesus' *post mortem* appearance before his disciples has had to be given up on both historical and scientific grounds. But Renan popularised the idea that the faith in the resurrection of the Messiah produced these legends. M. Loisy the author of *Jesus et la tradition*, catches hold of this idea and sits down to elaborate the teachings which created that faith. So Mr. Robertson pertinently remarks that "the historic creed of Christianity is thus figured as a pyramid poised on the apex of a hallucination, but," he playfully adds, "we are assured that the hallucination resulted from the greatness of the Personality of the slain Teacher." (H. J. p. 173). Scholar after scholar has taken up the cudgel and put in an appalling amount of labour, but with a steadily dwindling confidence. There are many who began as believers in the historicity*, but under the

Gospel story based on a hallucination.

* Robertson "reached the myth-theory as a result of sheer protracted failure to establish a presupposed historical foundation". And Prof. Smith "disclaims all criticism of Christianity". *The Jesus Problem*, p. 226.

stress of multiplying facts, daily gathering in strength and volume, the line of defence gradually shortened and position after position had to be abandoned with the result that the unthinking faithful only shrieked. At first, before an enormous quantity of inconsistencies and contradictions in the gospels the claim of Inspiration had to give way. No doubt, as very early it was inerrably detected that the story about Jesus was entirely based on hearsay and not on the report of any reliable eyewitness, to give it some sort of authenticity to the credulous people among whom it was first promulgated, the doctrine of Inspiration had to be invented. When the attempt was made to frame 'Harmonies' "the stupid pious" assured us that there was nothing to harmonise. But the inconsistencies, historical and otherwise, were too glaring to blink. Even the two genealogies are impossible to harmonise. Here we may profitably confer with such a sympathetic, almost a partisan writer as Dr. Estlin Carpenter (vide his *First Three Gospels*). Then Revelation, Miracle, Incarnation, Virgin birth, Resurrection and Ascension went the way of Inspiration, most of them being early put to rout by the massive hand of Strauss. Now it has been realised that the Baptism, the Temptation, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Transfiguration, the Betrayal, the Last Supper, the Agony, the Trials and the Crucifixion are as mythical as Resurrection. Resurrection has many legends based on the myth of the empty tomb. The most recent is that of the Ahmedian Moslems of India who hold that Jesus escaped death from crucifixion, travelled to India and died at the age of 120. His tomb is alleged to be still found in Srinagar, Káshmir. Vide *The American Moslem Sunrise*, p. 108,5 July, 1922. Porphyry the famous disciple of Plotinus, in ancient times, ridiculed the idea of bodily resurrection not only as impossible but objectionable too on the theological ground.

Biography impossible.

So, in despair, M. Loisy has given the gospels a go-by averring that "we must now renounce writing the life of Jesus. All the critics agree in recognising that the materials are insufficient for such an enterprise. The present little book does not," declares he mournfully, "pretend to be that history which it is impossible to recover" (*Jesus et la tradition* quoted in H. J. p. 143). Wernle says *amen*: "On the basis of these oldest resources we can write no biography, no so-called life of Jesus" (Ibid). So a distinguished French expert declares that the problem of the historicity of Jesus is insoluble, "because there are no documents" (*The Literary Guide*, April 1926). Dr. Alfred Edersheim, though he has written almost an informal commentary on the gospels running to sixteen hundred pages in two volumes, disclaims, in the preface

all pretension "to write a "Life of Christ" in the strict sense." Why? After consulting over four hundred authors on the subject he finds that "*the materials for it do not exist*" (*Jesus the Messiah*). No mean feat of an extraordinary intellect to write so big a commentary on *no meterials*. Comment is impossible. Another author, a believer in the historicity notwithstanding, indites : "I can not ignore the fact, confirmed by recent historical criticism, that it is impossible to extract from gospels sufficient incontestable evidence necessary for a biography (Friedlander, *The Sources of the Sermon*, p. xviii). And the attempt is useless in view of Bishop Gore's latest pronouncement: "Acceptance of the story of Christ remains an act of faith. There can be nothing demonstrable in history" (L. G., April 1926). Under the circumstances, the author of the *Jesus Problem* is not unjustified in holding that "criticism having in large part taken the form of denial that the records were unhistorical, it was necessary to clear the ground by showing that all the various attempts of the past generation to find in the gospels a historical residuum have entirely failed to meet critical tests. Those attempts, conflicting as they are with each other and collapsing as they do in themselves, give undesigned support to the conclusion that the gospel story is without historic basis" (p. 1). But when the Schmiedels and Loisys are trying their best to save something from the wreck, they are deprecated by those who want more. Yet we confidently hope that the heretics of to-day, by the natural process, would become the referees of to-morrow. This is the 'process of nibbling' by which the Biblical history has been undermined. From the above it is clear that the prominent facts of Jesus' life have been thrust into the limbo of myths by Higher Criticism. They are found to be inventions pure and simple. Now we shall see that minor incidents of his life and teachings, if not inventions, are compilations from the Old Testament and other earlier sources. If one says, as has actually been contended by one authority : "Like every man who speaks to men Jesus takes his ideas from the common treasure of his environment and his time" (Loisy), that is, a teacher must borrow from his environments, then this confession would make havoc of the claim of "originality" on the part of the "effulgant personality" as Canon Inge has put it.

Gradually whole eifice crumbles.

c. Matters Doctrinal.

At the very outset let me take up the momentous question of the "Word of God" one of the most fundamental Christian doctrines elaborated out of the Fourth Gospel. It is found in the Old Testament that Yahweh manifests

Word of God.

his power as in "Let there be light and there was light" by his Word as if it were his personal emanation (*Ps.* 147 ; *Isaiah*, 55[11]). In the Book of Wisdom, the idea is stronger, the *word* being spoken of almost as a personal agent (18[15]). Moreover, Dr. Langdon shows, as pointed out by Farnell, the parallelism between the Word or 'Memra' in the Hebrew texts and the Sumerian Inim or Enem meaning 'Word' and it is also personified in the liturgies as the Word of God (Vide *The Attributes of God* p. 233). So the second person of the Christian mythology is only a personification of an old world idea fused with the Greek Logos. Verily, what is taken to be a peculiar Christian doctrine is only a relic of the primitive magic religion where the *mantra* or word is all-powerful, virtually endowed with the creative faculty. Jesus asked his disciples to be perfect as God. What a noble ideal ? But it has been put bye Seneca psychologically and without the reproach attached to the Biblical dictum owing to its arising out of an invidious distinction between class and class and the condemnation of a whole class. The moralist asserts : "No disposition is good apart from God. Seeds of the divine are planted in human bodies ; if they are well tended, they germinate and grow up into likeness with that from whence they sprang"(as translated by Pfleiderer in *Pr. Ch.*, vol 1: p. 54).

Perfect as God.

Much is made of "Thy will be done". But this and much of its accompaniments were already current. Rabbi Eleazar commended the following prayer : "Do thy will, O God, in heaven above, and bestow tranquility of spirit on those who fear thee below, and what is good in their own sight do. Blessed art thou, O Lord, thou that hearest prayer" (T. B. Berachoth 296, p. 91). Epictetus gives us this idea also in the form of a prayer : "Do with me what thou wilt : my will is thy will : I appeal not against thy judgements". But many condemn this attitude as limiting the ideal prayer to mere acquiescent passivity (*The Attributes of God*, p. 245). Says William James : "In prayer spiritual energy which otherwise would slumber does become active, and spiritual work of some kind is effected really" (*Varieties of Religious Experience* p. 477).

Thy will be done.

In my early days when I took my first lessons in the Bible, one thing that struck me more than anything else was Jesus' blunt refusal to meekly submit to what I then supposed to be the tyranny of the Mosaic Law. He protested : "Man is not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath is made for man and the Son of man is the Lord of the

Man is not made for Sabbath.

Sabbath." His individuality was complete here, and it manifested itself in the lime-light. The nature of Jesus' movement as a protestant one seemed revealed to me in its true colour. I am now disillusioned. It is a quotation from the Talmud : "The Sabbath is given to you, not you to the Sabbath." Though the Lord's Prayer asks for daily bread, it is prefaced by the wholesome idea that God knows what we want. Here also there is nothing new as the reputed Roman writer Juvenal protested against praying for boons, "the argument being that the gods know better than their worshippers what the latter really need" (S. H. C.p. 62). We find the following direct parallels in the Talmud or Rabbinic sayings. In them also we find the doctrine already inculcated that it is not much or little but the heart within makes all the difference. The woman's mite in the Bible is overmatched by the Middrash story of the woman whose handful of meal as a sacrifice was preferred by God to heaps of incense from the High Priest. Jesus is not only fashioned after the Old Testament predictions, but words of God are put into his mouth, or his character is portrayed in such a way as to make him appear only as a *new* edition of the good old Yahweh! But, with this preliminary, let us proceed. One man may reject another man's petition, God accept our importunities. We find that the attempt in the gospels to base a parable on this old tenet has miscarried. It is, however, one of Hillel's sayings that exaltation is humiliation and humiliation is exaltation. In the next world the high are low, the low are high. You can desecrate the Sabbath in order to save one's life. Correct your own fault before you find fault with others (*Beam-mote doctrine* ?). The hypocrites and self-righteous are equally condemned by the Talmud. (Cf. Montefiore, *Old Testament and After*, pp. 451—452). So the Talmuds are very inconvenient books, we see, as far as the originality of the Bible is concerned. No wonder then that "the Talmud in wagon-loads was burned in Paris in 1242". (Pick, *Jesus in the Talmud*, p. 6, as quoted in A. T. Robertson's *The Pharisees and Jesus*, p. 53). The illustrations could be indefinitely multiplied. That the tree is known by its fruits is a favourite theme in the gospels (*Matt.* 8¹⁰; *Luke* 6⁴³). But in order to teach this God is not required to come down. Says Ovid: "If any one hopes this, let him hope tamarisks will bear apples." Plutark also: "We do not expect the vine to bear figs, nor the olive, clusters" (as quoted in *Ecce Deus*, p, 127—128).

Beam and mote.

There is a Synoptic problem. Now this synoptic problem is altogether solved whether Luke took from Matthew or Matthew from

Luke. They both drew upon far more ancient authorities than Jesus.

Synoptic problem.

As to the antithetic sentiments of who is for and who is against, one saying is attributed to Pompey and the other to Cæsar by Cicero's Oration at the beginning of the Civil War (Ibid p. 126). So no one need now tax his imagination to reconcile the two on behalf of Jesus, as they come from two other different sources, and not from Jesus at all.

Take again *John* 8^{12}. This passage has been deleted by the critics. Its interpolatory character is too loud to drown. At the close of the episode of the adulteress, Jesus is said to have been "left alone" with the woman. Dismissing her almost immediately: "Then spake Jesus again unto them"—unto whom? Certainly "unto" the empty space. And what he spake? "I am the light of the world." It is simply an imitation of the Sun-God, Mithra, who supplied cart-loads of materials to the *Jesus-build* (See below and especially Chapter xix c). In passing, it can not but add to our pleasure and

Flesh and spirit.

profit if we compare St. Paul's pathetic utterance in *Romans* 7^{24} with that of Epictetus: "Thou art a little soul carrying a corpse" and the notable verse 7^{15} unfolding the tragedy of the human soul with the latter's: "The sinner what he will, does not; and what he will not, does." The Stoic influence on this Epistle is not now contested (Ibid p. 131).

One another very important and edifying teaching of Jesus that

Bread and life.

arrested my attention in my early days being on par with the Upanishadic text "न प्राणेन नापानेन मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन:" is—"man shall not live by bread alone." etc (*Matt. and Luke* 4^{4}). But this is part of a saying in *Deut.* (8^{3}). Jesus' assurance to his disciples to be present in their midst where two or three meet in his name (*Matt.* 18^{20}) is more than matched by the Talmud (Prike Aboth, Col. 3): "Where there are two persons and the Law is the subject of discourse there also is the spirit of God"* Rájarshi Rámmohún comments on the verse: "We find similar expressions in the Scriptures, wherein the guidance of the Prophets of God is also meant by words that would imply their presence." So, "by the presence of Christ and that of other

First kingdom.

Prophets that may be observed in any part of the Bible their spiritual guidance should be understood and not their actual presence" (*Final Appeal*, p. 860).

* मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद। The Buddha is also made to say, "Where that [spiritual] Son of Buddha has stayed there I am" Sacred Books of the East, p. 327.

The verse: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," though not devoid of the reproach of the low ethic of reward, has nothing new about it. *Ps.* 34[10] most emphatically inculcates the doctrine: "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." There has been much hair-splitting over "Swear not at all." It is said that the Jewish Scriptures forbade oathtaking but not swearing as such. Therefore, it is claimed that an advance was made by Jesus by forbidding swearing altogether. But this is a mistake. Because, if any advance was made over the Old Testament it was made by the Essenes before Jesus (See *supra* p. 174). However, hair-splitting apart, the following passage demolishes the New Testament pretensions altogether. What Jesus said on the subject is reproduced almost *verbatim* from the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (49[1-2]): "For I swear to you, my children, but I will not swear by a single oath; neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by anything else made by God. God said: there is no swearing in me [*Luke* says there is !] nor injustice, but truth. If there is no truth in men, let them swear by a word—yea, yea, or nay, nay." On the other hand, the New Testament's claim is emptied of all its moral value as Jesus himself acted contrary to the precept (See *supra* p. 35). And there is no originality in the following saying also: "I am come to get a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law," because *Micah* 7[6] declared it long ago: "For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies are the men of his own house." In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, a pre-Christian document, we find that Jacob's twelve sons would rule the twelve tribes of Israel. If Jesus, Twelve Apostles are so to rule in the Messianic kingdom, it is only the gospeller's adaptation of that teaching together with the formula "on His right hand." By combining *Isaiah* 6[7] ("Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people") and *Jeremaih* 7[11], ("Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes ?") we easily get: "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of theives." (*Mark*,* 11[17]). The fact is too patent to be explained away that in the gospels there is a frantic effort to bring these treatises in line with Jewish traditions and

Oath-taking and swearing.

* *Matt.* 21. "This quotation taken from the combined passages of Scripture" did not escape the scrutiny of Rámmohún (p. 641).

prophecies. They are, as it were, possessed by this one idea. So it will not be out of place to point out here that this inveterate tendency to keep in touch with Prophecy and its fulfilment has throughout vitiated the gospel narrative so much as to make it a fiction. All the more a fiction as Rámmohun fully made out, that the story got its present aspect because of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the old Testament texts. "It is quite evident," says Dr. Percy Gardner, surveying the foundations of Christianity in a mood sympathetic towards historicity, and therefore there is much force in his utterance, that when history, "was written by and for people in such a frame of mind in regard to the fulfilment of prophecy, they could not have kept strictly to fact and evidence. And it is evident that our Gospels are by no means free from the results of this tendency" (*Exploratio Evangelica*, p. 156). Here the doctor has stated only a psychological truth. But the above I quote by the way to remove the monotony. The following verses are found in the *Deuternomy* : "I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights. [Is there no astronomical reference ?] I did neither eat bread nor drink water" 9⁹. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God" 6¹⁶. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve" 5¹³. I purposely refrain from quoting *Isaiah* as, in the proper place (Chap. xviii b), it will be shown that the gospel picture of Jesus is, in an important aspect, drawn on the model of the Prophet. But the following verse is in *Psalm* 31⁵ : "Into thine hand I commend my spirit." The crucifixion scene has been drawn from *Amos* 9⁸ : "It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon and I will darken the earth in the clear day." Why was Jesus deserted by his friends and disciples when pierced on the cross ? Because it is written in the *S'ástras* : "My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore and my kinsmen stand *afar off* (*Psalm* 38¹¹). Both *Mark* 15⁴⁰ and *Luke* 23⁴⁹ copy *afar off.* The eschatology has borrowed from *Daniel* 13¹⁴ : "There came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man......And there was given him dominion and glory." And 12² : "Many of them that sleep shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." But Jesus, out of infinite love, has ordained everlasting gnashing of teeth ! One very fine legend of Jesus' life is washing the feet of his disciples. But this is not a singular act. S'reekrishna did so, and the Buddha went a step further by washing away the filth from the body of a sick disciple who had been left unattended. Then, calling all the disciples together, Buddhadeva gave them the following advice : "Whoever wants to wait upon me should

Evangelists prepossessed.

wait upon the sick" (*Vinayapitakam*, Mahávagga 7^{26}). This simple advice of Buddha, in comparison, takes away all the virtue from similar utterances of Jesus (*Matt.* 25^{31-46}), because the Buddha's advice is very simple but Jesus vitiates his, as usual, with the promises of reward and punishment.

"The dead to bury their dead" has its parallel in a passage of the Talmud enjoining "to postpone the burial of the body of a relative to reading in the law" (*Witnesses* p. 278), and the story of anointment is suggested by the Psalmist 23^{5} : "Thou anointest my head with oil." As regards Jesus' compassion toward a woman-sinner found in John's gospel* alone, it is only a Christian version of the Buddhistic story of A´mbápali in Mahávagga. The story of the woman's mite has also a Buddhistic parallel in the *Sermons* of Aśvaghosa (as given in p. 234, *The Solution of the Synoptic Problem*). The penitent robber of the crucifixion scene is traced to another Buddhistic source. Observes Robinson Smith: "How Luke writing a hundred years after the event, came to picture one of the thieves as penitent, we can not say. Possibly because Buddha converted a penitent thief with a few gentle words." (Ibid p. 56.) This is evidently a reference to the conversion of the robber Angulimála who killed man after man and wore a garland made of their fingers. (*Majjhimanikáya*, 86). As the servant of God was to be called from Egypt, (*Hosea* 11^{1}) one gospeller (though through mistake) manufactured the flight to Egypt (quite untenable historically). The massacre of the Innocents must be referred to the legends of Moses and Krishna. As the Messiah would be called a Nazarene † (though it has got a quite different meaning), Jesus is made to settle for sometime in Nazareth, though "possibly there was no such

* Competent authorities hold that even in *John* it is an interpolation. According to the English Revised Version which, in the opinion of Conybeare (vide *Myth, Megio and Morals*. p. 72), is full of 'pious frauds' it is not found in the most ancient manuscripts. Those which contain it vary much from each other. So the story (*John* 7^{53} to 8^{11}) is given in brackets.

† *Nazarene* literally means one 'dedicated to God'. He is to grow his hair. It is a curious coincidence that when one meets a child in a Bengal village with long hair, one on enquiry will find the child 'dedicated to God'.

About the origin in Oriental mythology of the Christian belief of Christ's Descent into Hell also (1 *Peter* 3^{18}) Dr. T. K. Cheyne says : "The Descent into Hades is illustrated by the Mandœan story of the Divine Hero who descended into the nether world to fight with the king of darkness and to liberate the souls of the righteous" (*Bible Problems*, p. 25). He has in that book very clearly shown the borrowed nature also of the Virgin Birth, Resurrection and Ascension myths. This descent into Hell has a story of its own which I can not let off without drawing out its hidden

place as Nazareth at the time of Jesus." "It is absolutely excluded" says Paul Carus, "that Nazarenes can mean men born in Nazareth ; the word must be the name of a sect of which Jesus was a member." *Open Court* 1909, p. 229). Then, why the venture ? Because, "when men began to make an historical person of Jesus, they found the agreement of the word with Nazareth a very welcome opportunity to conceal the real origin of Jesus in Isaiah" (vide "Nazar" in *Isaiah (Witnesses*, p. 204). Evidently Nazareth in the gospels is an after-thought and later discovery. Says Mr. Robertson : "The textual analysis shows wherever it occurs in the gospels and *Acts* the name Nazareth has been foisted on the documents" (S. H. C. p. 9) "It comes, therefore, as a momentous surprise to be told" observes. Rev. W. Wooding, "that Nazareth is a mere geographical fiction ; that it is not once mentioned in the Old Testament nor yet in the Talmud though the latter gives a list of no fewer than 63 galilean towns ; that it occurs neither in Josephus nor in the Apocrypha" (p. 867, *Hibbert Journal* 1911). Dr. Goguel in his *Jesus the Nazarene—Myth or History* rests his argument that the word *Nazarene* is not connected with the Jewish Nazarite sect on the Christian tradition of Jesus' non-ascetic character. But whereon to base the argument of the historicity of that tradition ? The myth-theory shows, as Mr. Robertson argues, that the anti-ascetic stories are purposive attempts to deflect the name from its original significance to the fiction of the *Jesus of Nazareth*. This much then for Nazareth. As he is somehow to be connected with Bethlehem, the City of David, to make Jesus both Ben-David and Ben-Joseph. Joseph, the putative father, is sent to a distant place to be taxed, accompanied, not by his married wife (that even would seem improbable enough), but by his "betrothed" about to give

Nazareth myth.

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meaning. For obvious reasons I do not generally refer to Krishnaism because of an easy rebuff on the score of the date. But in this case there is absolutely no doubt about the borrowering party. Krishna's descent into Hades (elaborately dealt with in my Bengali book) is based on a vedic solar myth, and the Christ-myth copies it in al details. Curiously enough Moor in his *Hindu Pantheon* refers to Christ's ascension to heaven on an *Eagle*. Whence has this myth come if not from India ? *Garudha* as a "Christophoros" must be a sight Gods will look back to see ! But the humour of this episode lies in the suppression of this whole passage by Rev. W. O. Simpson in his 1864 edition of Moor's work. This is how the pious messengers of Christ try to save the skin of their saviour whose borrowed mythical character can no longer be concealed (Vide C. M. p. 238).

birth to a child !* No sane man can believe that. If Mommsen is to be accepted this was not the case. Even the citizen's wife was not required to be enrolled, what of the 'betrothed' (*History of Rome*, vol. iv, p. 158. Cp. F. Th. G., p. 114). On the other hand, "Josephus knows nothing of a Roman census in Palestine in the time of Herod," and "a census held under Qurinius could not have occurred in the time of Herod" (Schurer's *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii, pp. 127 and 133). But in their mad pursuit of the idea already alluded to, *viz.*, of bringing their story in line with the Old Testament, the story-tellers of the New Testament were blind to all contradictions and impossibilities. "Once the principle was established that the picture of the Messiah was pourtrayed in the Old Testament the further step followed inevitably," holds Pfleiderer, that the traits which were thought to be found in the sacred archives were introduced into the life of Jesus, and that, consequently, the record of Jesus' life and work was modified in conformity with the standard of the Messianically interpreted passages of the Old Testament" (Pr. Ch. vol. 1, p. 23). Yet, infancy episodes are more abundant in the apocryphal than in the canonical gospels. So is the case with Krishna. Infantile gossips abound only in the Bhágavata and post-Mahábhárata compositions. However, as Old Testament Elijah and Elisha raised the "widow's son" from the dead, why not the New Testament Messiah ? We find in the *Psalm* 116[13-19] that God's servant would make the sacrifice in Jerusalem, in the presence of all his people, so Jesus was, in the last moment, triumphantly led to Jerusalem though the episode "swarms with historical and scientific impossibilities." (Schneider quoted in *Witnesses*, p. 249) Even M. Loisy finds it hard to swallow that after so triumphal an entry the people, in a week's time would clamour : "Crucify him." In his crucifixion Jesus wore a crown of thorn, the insignia of royalty. Why not ? The sacrificed "only-begotten son" of the Semitic God El did so ! And the crown is a sure indication of the solar myth. Jesus thirsteth on the cross. One myth-maker gives him "gall", the other "vinegar," because in the Old Testament (Ps. 69[21]) we read : "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." The soldiers casting lots with Jesus' garments have most consistently been brought in here

Census mythical.

Entry into Jerusalem fictitious—Crucifixion.

* The story has its probable origin in the nativity of Buddha whose mother gave birth to the child when on a journey. In the Gospel of Infancy, Mary also has been given a nurse to bring her in line with the Buddha's mother, Máyádevi. They say Maia and Mary come from the same root (Vide *Witnesses* p. 164).

in agreement with the Old Testament. The fourth gospeller the most mythical of them all, has related the tale of leg-breaking. The breaking of the victim's leg is part of a mystic rite. Taken together with the eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of the sacrificed one, it does not require much trouble to understand that it was all introduced, first actually, then symbolically, in adaptation from some sacrificial ceremony, most probably the "mysterious paschal sacrifice." Then what follow—the burial, resurrection, empty tomb, reappearance, ascension are all myths, easily traceable to Mithra cults and Moses legends (Vide *Solution of the Synoptic Problem*, p, 46). Luke's indebtedness to Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, has been established beyond all doubts (Ibid pp. 29—46). In the account of the Crucifixion the multitude's 'smiting their breasts' and Jesus' address: 'Daughters of Jerusalem,' and in that of the Ascension, 'a cloud received him out of their sight'—all are taken almost verbatim from *Antiquities* as related of Moses about his last journey. Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (*Luke* 19^{41}) is borrowed from that of Tacitus in the *Jewish War*: "As Tacitus came to Jerusalem in his progress, he could not but pity the destruction of the city." Let us for a moment turn to the Rabbinical literature. The gift of tongues at the Pentecost (*Acts*, 2^{1-15}) is taken from Midrash: "The voice from Sinai was divided into seventy voices and seventy languages, so that all nations of the earth heard the law, and each actually in its own language."

Transfiguration.

The Transfiguration is copied from Philo's *Life of Moses*. Not only the thought but the language also is so similar that R. Smith has rightly said: "Philonic thought and language, the thought and language of Greek philosophy as apparent in Alexandria during the first half of the Christian century appear *passim* throughout the New Testament." What is said here of Moses by Philo is, of course, mostly allegorical: "For having gone up into the *loftiest* and most sacred mountain in the neighbourhood in accordance with the divine command, Moses is said to have remained there all that time without eating any of that food which is necessary for life. And as I said before, he descended again after forty days, much more beautiful in his face than when he went up, so that those who saw him wondered and were amazed and could no longer endure to look upon him with their eyes, in as much as *his countenance shone like the light of the sun*." This passage has supplied most of the materials for the Transfiguration and the Temptation. The Transfiguration has come down from long past. We find the same in the case of the Buddha too. (See *infra*.) It is a

symbolico-mythical representation. It has been incorporated in the gospels as an episode in the Passion of Christ. There were enough Passion Plays and Mystery Dramas in the environment where the gospels were written. Though, as an act of actual life, it seems to be weird, in theatrical performances these things are very easily managed. And in the artistic Græco-Roman world there was no lack of such entertainments. Unless theological obsession is removed, truth does not appear in its naked reality. About the Transfiguration thelogians hold all sorts of opinion. Farrar, Geikie and Edersheim take it to be a real incident. Meyer divides the account into two parts—transfiguration actual and the presence of Moses and Elijah seen in a vision. A host of others explain it to be subjective. But how did all the three attendants of Jesus see the same dream at the same moment? So, others objectively explain it away by the sunset glow of a mountain peak and Jesus' secret conference with two Essenee friends. So on and so forth. The fate of a myth can not fare better. But Dr. Carpenter observes: "The transfiguration and many other narratives do but throw into the forms of personal incident the reflection of the Church on the Master's life, viewed at one time in relation to the spiritual powers which preceded him, at another in connection with the great movement which issued from it". (*First Three Gospels*, p. 56). It is not the transfiguration only about which we find an internal evidence of a dramatic performance. In the *Galatians* 3[1] we find "before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth, crucified". This is a sure reference to some pictorical represen-tation. The fourth Sermon of St. Proclus (Bishop of Constantinople, 432-446) exhorts all to come and see the Virgin and the swaddled child in cradle. This cannot but be a dramatic representation (Vide *C. M.* p. 218). It is, however, now clear why topographers have failed to locate the *high mountain* of Matthew and Mark. They should have searched for it in Moses and in Moses also it is in all likelihood a mythical mountain. When climbing the sacred mountain Moses was accompanied by Aaron, Nadab and Abihu. Jesus also had this exact number of followers—Peter and James and John. From the *Book of Tobit* it is easily shown that even the praseology of the Prodi-gal Son is borrowed from there. I cannot help quoting a passage to show how diverse clauses and phrases from it have been strewn broadcast over the New Testament. And not ideas but expressions are more forcible signs of borrowal: "And they (Tobit and Tobias) were both troubled and fell upon their faces, and they were afraid. And he (Raphael) said unto them, Be not afraid, peace be unto you When I was with you...And ye behold me that I have eaten nothing.

Behold, I ascend to him that sent me...And he ascended. And they rose up and could no longer see him. And they blessed and praised God." It has been ascertained by competent scholars that Luke uses "Truly," "Of a truth," "Lo!" 'Yea', or "Behold" as introduction to borrowed matter, and he transposes not only events thereby causing anachronism with which his Gospel is replete, but also transposes parts of clauses. And Luke is a pastmaster "in inventing incidents, and even institutions" as Conybeare has remarked (Work cited p. 86). But more of it later on. We read in *Luke* 7³² (also in *Matt.* 11¹⁶): "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced" reminding one of Herodotus' account of Cyrus who, when after his victory over Crœsus the hitherto recalcitrant Ionians showed signs of submission, addressed them in a parable: "You need not dance now, since you would not dance when I piped" (As quoted in *Witnesses*, p. 191). The source of "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat" (*Matt.* 7¹³), and of "Strait *is* the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (*Matt.* 7¹⁴) is easily traced: "Unto wickedness men attain easily and in multitudes: Smooth is the way, and her dwelling is very near at hand. But the immortal gods have ordained much sweat upon the path to virtue: long and steep is the way thither, and rough at first; but when a man has reached the height, thereafter the hard road is easy" (Cornford, *Greek Religious Thought*, p. 29 from Hesiod—800 B, C.) The plagiarist can not be said to have improved upon the original. In a controversy with Brahmánanda Keshubchandra Sen of Calcutta, Rev. Lal Behari De, a Christian gentleman, accused the Bráhma Samáj as the pilferer of truths. There is no secrecy in it that the Samaj, on principle, accepts truths from whatever quarter it comes. The question of pilfering does not arise at all. If pilfering in a large scale was ever practised it was done by Christianity. There is not a single tenet or idea in it but borrowed from older creeds and cults. Is it not a fact that this was thrust upon the world as a brand-new revelation under the grandiloquent title, the New Testament? Jesus' advice to the injured (*Matt.* 5³⁹ ffg.) is ever praised but never carried into practice in Christendom. But it is a Socratic advice, so the Christians are not bound by it. Incalculates the Greek sage (*Gorgias* 527): "To do injustice is more to be avoided than to suffer injustice And never mind if some one despises you as a fool, and insults you, if he has a mind; let him strike you, by *Zeus*, and do you be of good cheer and do not mind the insulting blow, for you will

Pilfering of truths.

never come to any harm in the practice of virtue [न हि कल्याणकृत् कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति—गीता], if you are a really good and true man" (Jowett's *Dialogues*, vol. ii. p. 421)

I wanted to stop but find myself not a free agent, being carried onward step by step, inspite of myself, by the irrepressible potentiality of the 'uninventibility' of the New Testament. Here is a gem discovered by the search-light of Biblical research. Luke says: "They found him [Jesus] in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors

Jesus a replica of Josephus.

both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding." And all this happened when Jesus was "twelve years old" (2^{42-47}). But how this happened? Why, we read in the autobiography of Josephus: "When I was about fourteen years old I was praised by all for my love of learning, and the chief men of the city continually came together in order to learn from me some more accurate knowledge concerning the things of the law." The difference is the difference of about two years and that is not much between a man and a god. Luke held up his hero only two years earlier and in that he has not surpassed the folk-lorists of our own country who made teachers of their heroes from before their birth. And S'reekrishna passed the full round of his youth by the 12th year, exactly the age of Jesus at that time. Curiously enough in this page of his autobiography Josephus describes his own shipwreck which, there is nothing to be astonished at, tallies in all particulars with St. Paul's shipwreck given in the *Acts*, and Luke is said to be its author. Competent scholars have detected in it "the fusion of an original narrative with more or less legendary anecdotes" (*Origins of Christianity*, p. 74). Among the Evangelists it is only Luke who introduces the mission of the 70 or 72 (Vide *Supra* p. 179). Conybeare lays it at the door of Luke's "manufacturing skill". But the gospeller did not draw upon his imagination only. He took his hint here as elsewhere from Josephus. The historian in his mission to Rome was accompanied by 70 disciples "to judge causes". Luke did not like it that his Master should be satisfied with *twelve* when Josephus had *seventy*.

Theudas and Judas the Galilean's sons were rebels. We know them from the *Antiquities*. Luke's accounts of Theudas and Judas of Galilee in *Acts* (5^{34-37}) through the mouth of Gamaliel are evidently based on an imperfect recollection of Josephus, and Luke's narration is an anachronism already pointed out by Harnack. In the *Antiquities* we see that Herod declared himself a god: "On the second

day he put on a garment made wholly of silver and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre in the morning...and presently his flatterers called out...that he was a god...and they added, 'although we have hitherto reverenced thee only as a man yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.' Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery...A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. ......And when he had been quite worn out with the pain in his belly for five days he departed this life." Luke (*Acts* 12^{21-23}) parapRases this excellently well, retaining a goodly number of phrases with the inevitable anachronism and the usual supernatural taint, so that in Josephus the owl flew over the king's head, but Luke brings in the angel. Whittaker also has shown from many details of the narrative that the "authors of the Acts of the Apostles made use of Josephus among his sources." He points out that "the chief personages connected with Paul's imprisonment and trial—Felix and Drusilla, Festus, Agrippa and Berenice—are all taken from Josephus. The narrative itself is an insertion by him in the *Acts of Paul*. The coincidence with Josephus in the introduction of Festus is ever verbal" (*Origins of Christianity*, p. 82.) No wonder, then, the New Testament is looked upon wholly as a patch-work.

Scepticism and pious fraud.

And this sceptism about the historicity of Jesus is not a new thing due to the rationalistic tendencies of the age. There has been a doubt all along from the very beginning. Even in the first and second centuries the problem was raised and had to be solved. Finding no other means, the champions of historicity adopted a method which is euphemistically called "pious fraud." Passages were introduced into the writings of authoritative historians, such as Josephus and Tacitus (*supra* p. 185) which have now been proved beyond all doubts to be spurious. Of this Christian pious fraud in different fields, there is no end both in quality and quantity. In order to explain miracles, critics, naturally beginning with Renan, have not hesitated to attribute such tricks to Jesus himself ! And that to rescue historicity. Historicity is in such a sore strait !

Mill's fallacy.

From what has been said above, it lies with the critical reader to judge if the New Testament is not possible to invent, and whether we have not already got sufficient reply to Dean Inge's "considerable body of sayings which must be genuine because they are far too great to have been invented by His disciples" (H. J., p. 8). Of course the faithful theologian is here in a marked degree inspired by the fallacy of the infidel logician,

J. S. Mill, who, according to Bain, "scarcely ever read a theological book." Mill had neither the leisure nor the mind to carefully and critically read, mark and digest even the Testaments only, both Old and New, else he could not write : "But who *among his disciples or among their proselytes* was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels ? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee" ! (*Three Essays on Religion*, pp. 253-254). Without apology and without comment I, in Mill's support, add Rousseau's remark : "Inventors would be even more wonderful than He whom they portray." Where is logic in questioning the capacity of inventing by fishermen of Galilee the utterances ascribed to an illiterate carpenter, also a Galilean ? Is it not *petitio principii* to think that a fisherman could not reach the height that a carpenter did ? How did the carpenter evolve a thought which the fisherman could not ? Mill's position can not be justified except by attributing supernatural power to Jesus. He is here on the precipitous road towards Parthenogenesis and Resurrection. The avowed rationalist has most assuredly fallen a victim to the primitive supernaturalistic concepts owing to his environment of orthodox preposession. He has claimed for Christ an intellectual and psychological miracle which amounts to a total breach of evolution. And that seems to be the cant of all learned savants : "Pharisaism" says Rev. Herford "after already a considerable length of existence and development, suddenly found itself confronted by Jesus. I say 'suddenly' because there had been nothing in the past history of Judaism to prepare men for the appearance of one such as he (*The Pharisees*, p. 201). This otherwise very estimable book has been vitiated by such prepossessed effusions. Because, from what we have already said and what is coming after, it is evident that there is not an iota of truth in the above remark either as to the personality of Jesus or to the teachings attributed to him; there is absolutely nothing new. Partisans like Herford strengthen the hands of mythical and symbolical school more than those directly opposed to the historical interpretation. This is no age of miracle-mongering, and to insist on the breach of natural evolution as to a man's appearance on this historic stage, however great he may be, is to make havoc on the claim of historicity. To go against evolution is to make it unhistorical. However, contrast this with the following passage quoted by Robertson from "Revelation and Mythology", a book published anonymously so early as 1799 : "The whole life of Jesus, all that he should and would do, had an ideal existence in the Jewish mind long prior to his birth." So the question of suddenness

and unpreparedness does not arise. Strauss has amply proved that the life of Jesus was manufactured out of the Old Testament materials. So Jesus's could not be a surprise-birth for the Jews, as the scholar would have us believe that no one was prepared for Jesus. "The fundamental source of error in this connection" observes Mr. Robertson, "is the assumption that mere moral doctrine can regenerate any society independently of a vital change in social and intellectual conditions. In the ancient world, as in the modern, these were the substantial determinants for the mass of men and women (S. H. C. pp. 64-65). Instead of raising the social and intellectual conditions of the masses, Christianity adopted the opposite process. It popularised itself by assimilating the pagan cults and creeds *en masse* that their adherents felt no change. It is a chimera of chimeras in the thought-world that there suddenly dropped from the high heaven a religiously inspired teacher to whose elevated thoughts no one else had any access. Quite opposite is the truth. His thoughts, if any, were accepted by the people, if accepted at all, only because they could independently think those thoughts. This is corroborated by Newman, a religious man to the back bone. "There is little in the ethics of Christianity which the human mind may not reach by its natural powers and which, here and there,...has not in fact been anticipated" (as quoted in *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 290), Of course, Dr. Newman is not a historian. I refer to him only to find a contrast of Mill. But the decisive reply to Mill comes from Mr. McCabe who has traced the origin of Jesuine teachings from 5000 B. C. in Egypt to the very eve of Christianity with the remark : "It used to be said, if Jesus never existed, the writers of the Gospels were more wonderful than Jesus. On the contrary, as biographers they are paltry ; and as writers of moral compendiums they lived in an international religious atmosphere which contained every element that we find in the Gospels." (*Sources of the Morality of the Gospels*, p. 23). So a miraculous moral insight in a prophet much in advance of his time was not required to compile those maxims. Even Schmiedel concedes that the plea of the inability to invent the gospel figure of Jesus is not valid argument in its general form. (cp. *Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p. 13). This has led him to special passages—the *Pillar* passages we will take up in the next Chapter. But we have not yet extricated ourselves from the clutches of M. Loisy who pursues us with the query : "One can explain to oneself Jesus : one can not explain to oneself those who invented him." We meet him with a counter

Prophecy the basis.

Fallacy exposed.

query! We do not understand who invented Mithra and Krishna—gods who were worshipped and are still worshipped by thousands as historical personages. Does this make them historical? But, in point of fact, Mr. Loisy has, in a masterly way, performed the surgical operation which he now objects in others. M. Loisy's critical knife goes far deeper than one is entitled to suspect from his position in the Church. Says Dr. Smith: "At one point, at least, Loisy, in harmony with Harnack, represents Jesus as beyond measure visionary, as in fact insane.,' (*Ecce Deus*, p. xv.) Has he not himself explained away as inventions a large number of gospel stories, giving lucid explanation how and why they were invented? Others are only similarly dealing with other portions. He has understood about some parts only that they are inventions, and contended that if they are not rejected, the whole would be an incongruous medley. His critics feel this only about the portions he has retained. So the difficulty is illusory. Are theologians occupied all these centuries in "explaining to oneself" imaginary things, queries the credulous? Yes, and as even Mosheim in the 18th century believed Mithra and Mercury to be historical, the objection has no leg to stand upon.

Loisy's inconsistency.

Now the problem of problems stares us in the face. What would become of Christianity if its central figure is removed from its setting? The question is asked: "What will take the place of the Bible? Who in modern days can write a new Bible to substitute for the old? We answer: No one book need hold such a place, and no one could compose or compile such a book. The entire past and present, and each new day in the fastgrowing world, each fact and object, adds a new verse to the world's Bible. No other department of human inquiry has crystallised into one book, and surely the idea of one book in religion limits and stifles this most universal aspiration." (Nathaniel J. Robinkam, Ph. D., formerly a clergyman—a pulpit preacher and pastor for twenty years. Liberalism growing in him and himself feeling disgusted with sacerdotalism, he has seceded from the Church. He found no other way left to save his conscience. *Open Court*, 1911). But the question itself presupposes that the false belief is anybody's personal property, for the destruction of which some compensation must be made. However, the solution comes from an unexpected quarter. Emphatically avowing that faith in Jesus and his ethical system warms his heart and strengthens his life in a way nothing else does, Prof. Schmiedel assures us with equal emphasis that "my inmost religious convictions would

Is substitute necessary?

suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that Jesus never lived," because, he affirms, it is not necessary "to find in Jesus an *absolutely perfect model*" and actually he has not found him so. (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p. 85-87). Comment is unnecessary, because we do not want more. But we will not resist when *more* is forthcoming. Dr. G. Stanley Hall, an authority who believes he can subscribe to every clause of the Apostles' Creed in his own 'intellectual interpretation of the meaning of each item', nevertheless holds : "I believe in the historic Jesus, but I have tried to show how even the Church can get on, if it should ever have to do so, without him, and that this might possibly ultimately make for greater spirituality. The true Christ is present in human hearts" (*Jesus the Christ in the Light of Psychology*, vol. i, p. viii). This brings us almost to the verge of myth-theory. Only the terrified orthodox cry : *et tu*, *Brute* ? After the Professor's confession the historicists must in their desperation seek help with the common prayer : "God save us from our friends". This is an apt illustration of what they call "being wounded in the house of their friends."

Now it should be acknowledged on all hands that the claim of uniqueness is preposterous even as a general consideration of moral and religious teaching and action. Does the claim fare better on the grounds of spiritual conceptions assumed to be specially of the Christian brand ? An emphatic reply in the negative comes from Mr. Robertson : "Indeed there is not a conception associated with the Christ that is not common to some or all of the Saviour-cults of antiquity." Yahweh had the title *saviour.* So also the Greek Zeus, Dionysos and a host of others. This is the essential conception of God Osiris who takes away sins, judges the dead and is the lord of the last judgment. The Orphics also believed as Pfleiderer points out, in Saviours and divinely inspired mediators who are sent from time to time to help mankind. (Pr. Ch. vol. i, p. 56). Osiris was specially called *Chrestos.* Cross was a divine and mystic emblem in the case of Serapis, the revived Osiris. The devotees of Serapis were called bishops of Christ. (Vide S. H. C. p. 35). Attis and Adonis, Osiris and Dionysos all suffer, die and rise again, the mystical passion and immortality not being exempted. Among the Khonds the crucified victim die "for the whole world." The symbolic key of heaven and hell is taken from Mithraism. Mithra is virgin-born and kills the Evil One and with some other gods such as Chaldean sun-god Shamash is the Mediator. The resurrection from the rock-tomb is based on that of this God. Mithra was born out of a rock (Jesus too in

Theological conceptions also borrowed.

the rock-cave—see *Apocrypha*) when worship was offered by shepherds to the newborn babe as in all sun-myths. "He it is who shall raise the dead, hold a universal judgment, destroy the ungodly in a great conflagration [Eternal hell-fire ?] and bestow upon the righteous eternal life in a *new world*" (*Ibid* vol. iii. p. 104). The Jewish Eschatology incorporated in the Christian Messianism was borrowed from Persia. There were many Trinities before Christianity. In the East the idea of the incarnation of God is as old as the hills. The Logos idea is a thrice-told tale. The fourth gospel borrowed it bodily. Meroduch is associated with a Holy Spirit whose symbol is fire. The Christmas on the 25th December is an evident solar myth dating from antiquity, and so is the Easter. The idea of the dissolution of the world at the advent of the Kingdom of God was already borrowed by the Jews from the Persians. Therefore, inspite of Conybeare's unhistorical cheap sneer in his *Historical Christ* (p. 69), Robertson remains historically justified in his verdict: "The Christian system is a patch-work of a hundred suggestions drawn from pagan art and ritual usage" (*Christianity and Mythology*, p. 305). So it is established that Christianity merely borrowed its cardinal conceptions from pagan religions then in vogue in the Mediterranean world, and reshaped them in the light of Jewish practice and Roman environment reinforced by Greek thoughts (*Pagan Christs*, p. 206). No wonder then, thus exposed, Christian arrogance, as Rájarshi Rámmohun pointed out, due to its political and economical superiority in the world, would now reach almost the vanishing point, and Prof. Max Muller be induced to think aloud: "Even supposing some or many of the doctrines of Chritianity were found in other religions also, [and they certainly are] does that make them less true"? (As quoted in *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 155). Certainly not, only these truths were discovered far earlier! But the claims of originality falls to the ground all the same.

Claim of uniqueness untenable and therefore given up.

In a recent controversy (*Modern Review*, Nov. 1923) a Doctor of Divinity also admits that much. Mr. E. Stanley Jones, M. A., D. D. has been forced to make the admission which was no longer possible for a sane man to withhold. He philosophises that the universe is a moral universe; whenever men strike true notes "it will be found that others are striking the same notes to the degree that they are true. [What to say when "not true but fantastic" ?—See the Addenda]. Hence it is not surprising that we find similar moral ideas [mystic sayings too !] in both Buddhism and Christianity." Indeed not surprising as Buddhism is older by five hundred years, and Buddhistic doctrines were cur-

rent at the birth-place of Christianity. What, then, about the plea of uniqueness? But we will not give up the thread until we have pursued it a little further. If it is tardily admitted, unpalatable as it is in itself and destructive of all specially Christian claims in consequence, there were, at last five hundred years before the Christian era, some nations among the Gentiles that could claim equal spiritual flight, then, what is the meaning of Christ's sneering remarks (*Matt.* 6[32]): "After all these things do the Gentiles seek", as if the Gentiles had no consciousness of higher things like the Jews, the Brahmins of the then world as it were, whereas the truth is quite the other way about! A little earlier in the Chapter (verse 7) we find another disparaging reference to the Gentiles where they are condemned as using vain repetitions in prayer that they think they would be heard for their much speaking. Now withholding for the present the just comment that Jesus has contradicted himself in this point in the parable of the unfortunate woman (*Supra*.pp. 118-119) by making his God hear because of "much speaking" it must be said as a repudiation of this form of Jewish vanity that the Hindus evolved a system of *niskáma* prayer which has never, before or after, been equalled, much less excelled in the whole history of the spiritual culture of the human race. It is to be noted that theory must be pitted against theory and practice against practice. It will not do to contrast the theory of one system with the practice of another. In no country the common people realise the highest ideal of their religion. It is evidently from such utterances of Jesus the afore-mentioned Christian arrogances was derived. But is not such an utterance based on an egregious ignorance almost verging on moral turpitude? At that traditional date at least two living Gentile nations, the Hindu-Buddhist and the Greco-Roman, possessed religious culture of a calibre overwhelmingly superior to that of the Jews. Their religious systems, in their polytheistic aspect even, were of far higher spiritual level than the so-called Hebrew monotheism centred round a tribal God, located in a temple to be propitiated by abominable sacrificial offerings. "Jehova was indentified, indeed, by the higher prophets with the God of the universe; but he remained essentially an invisible king to be recognised by the State, demanding," says Mr. Whittaker, "at the hands of his chosen people a perpetual service of bloodshed and burnt offering' (*The Origins of Christianity* p. 9, *supra* p. 27). What was Passover? A friend who has made a thorough study of the whole thing tells me that to call it 'beastly' would be to abuse the beasts. Is not Jesus himself said to have acquiesced, even actively

Biblical disparagement of the Gentile.

taken part or advised others to take part in it? What a contrast with the great Buddha who raised his standard of revolt for the total abolition of sacrifices of whatever description. Did not Jesus at times advise his audience to follow the Pharisees as they "sit in Moses' seat" (*Matt* 23^{1-3})? Half a millennium after the thorough-going reformer of Kapilavastu, the Jesuine movement appears to those, whose historic perspective has not been twisted by any extraneous consideration, dwindling into nothingness as the glow-worm before the sun. We must by this time be prepared to give up the superstition of claiming any form whatsoever of the so-called Monotheism, for all practical purposes in this case an antimoral religion (vide *supra*, Chap. iii d, pp. 81-96), to be superior to the Greek or Hindu Polytheism. This claim cannot be put forth except on uncritical conventional ground. From some such abstract conventionalism Cumont in *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism* opines: "Never did any highly cultured people have a more infantile religion than the Greeks and Romans" as quoted by Inge who blesses this unjustifiable opinion with the remark: "Cumont says truly that the East was far more civilised in religion than the West" (Inge's *Plotinus*, vol. i p. 39), of course, comparing the Greek and Hebrew religions only. These writers are really unconscious of the significance of their own utterances. The Australian aborigines believe in one God, at the same time they practise human sacrifice for the good of "the whole world," but no man with a bit of grey substance under his hair places these religions alongside modern Christianity inspite of the latter's acknowledged blemishes. (vide *Pagan Christs*, p. 66-74).

ADDENDA.

Indebtedness of Christianity to Buddhism.

Time was when oriental scholarship was not much concerned with Pali and yet in Pali is enshrined the very pith of oriental culture. Thanks to the Pali Text Society, about twenty-six thousand pages of Pali texts are already in print. The late lamented Dr. Rhys Davids has done for Pali what Max Muller did for Sanskrit. But the discovery of Pali literature has made the scholar's position rather complicated, especially for the Christian scholar. He had been already shy of comparative theology, Buddhism made him shier. Because the Christian missionary roams the world with the pretension of a very high ethics. But to confound him, Buddhism presents him with a higher ethics, with finer legends of the founder and a loftier character, and these more than five centuries older. How intricate is the situation for a Christian scholar will be evident from some of the utterances of Dr. Rhys Davids. After studying the Buddhist literature, he found that it embodied a high spiritual culture. And when an ordinary man would say, it was a mimicry of the devil, the doctor said as early as 1877 in a lecture now published for the first time in the Journal of the Pali Text Society (1920-1923) :—"It is not too much to say that almost the whole of the moral teaching of the Gospels, as distinct from the dogmatic teaching, will be found in the Buddhist writings several centuries older than the Gospels ; that, for instance, of all the moral doctrines collected together in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, all those which can be separated from the theistic dogmas there maintained, are found again in the Pitakas."

Here arises for the honest Christian scholar a complex of irreconcilable claims,—allegiance to truth for its own sake and to traditional faith tacitly assumed to be true—concession to the one is an offence against the other. Yet, after the above confession of Dr. Rhys Davids, the fact of the borrowing of Christianity forces itself on us, as Buddhism is the older of the two creeds and it possesses the stuff to lend. (Vide *Supra*, Chap. ix, p. 166). The only point to be established is the historical connection between the two. This is the loophole for the Christian scholarship, because at that early period evidences were not many nor very strong and the Professor did not leave it unnoticed. He questioned: "Does history record that any Buddhist came to Europe or Palestine (Alexandria ?) and that any one travelled hence

to India and brought back Buddhist teaching?" Max Muller also wrote about 30 years ago in 1896, and the idea is sown broadcast in his *Chips* and *Selected Works*: "I must confess that for years I have been very much perplexed myself; and even now, though I can not resist the impression that there must have been historical contact between Christianity and Buddhism. I can not explain how it came about, I can not point out the exact historical channel through which the communication took place" (As quoted in the *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1905). Tiele is also of the same opinion: "India was already in communication with Egypt before our era" (C. M., p. 170). So scholars are now generally agreed on the fact of Buddhist influences on the making of Christianity. "Although [Asoka's] missionary effort did not succeed in planting Buddhist Churches in foreign countries excepting Syria" says Mr. Vincent Smith (Kennedy, "Buddhist Gnosticism", *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1902), "its effect may be traced obscurely both on the history of Gnostic and Manichaean sects of Christianity." (*The Calcutta Review*, January, 1926). But much water has flown under the bridges since. In antiquarian researches, our knowledge is advancing by leaps and bounds. Nobody can assert that a new surprise is not in store for us to-morrow. Are not Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro discoveries revolutionising our idea of ancient history? So Professor Rhys Davids had to revise his views of late, so much so that he admitted: "The evidences in favour of intercommunication are growing every day" (*The Open Court*, 1911). From the above consideration especially influenced by Prof. Garbe (*Indien und das Christenthum*, 1914) even Dr. Carpenter has been obliged to relent, however reluctantly that may be (vide *Buddhism and Christianity*, pp. 180-181. Cp. *Supra* f. n. pp. 45). More evidences are forthcoming daily. "The famous Besnagar Column (C. 150 B. C.) announces the conversion of a Greek ruler to Vaisnavism of the Bhágavat sect, while the Buddhist classic *Milinda Panha* (the Questions of Milinda or Menander) stands as a proof of the assertion of the Buddist thought against Greek mind" (Dr. K. Nag, M.A., D.Lit. (Paris) in the *Calcutta Review*, January 1926). Dr. D. R. Bhándarkar in his Carmichael Lectures of the Calcutta University has shown that by Emperor Asoke Buddhism was propagated in Macedonia and other provinces subject to Greek rulers.

Pre-Christian Historical contact with India.

The European scholar's vision was too much bounded by the Euphrates. Earlier still the purity of the Hebrew scriptures was his most sacred trust. But their sacrosanct character no longer

endures; the Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, and even Hellenic, influences are too apparent to ignore. And the New Testament composition, too, cannot be explained by the books of the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Romans. Our *pond* no longer is the Mediterranean but the Pacific Ocean. The Sacred Books of the East are intruding into notice and intruding irresistibly. Who can oppose the surging tide with a broomstick? To trace the influence of Buddhism alone would lead us beyond our scope. One will find a glimpse of it in Arthur Lillie's *Buddhism in Christendom*, *Buddha and Buddhism* and the American scholar Albert J. Edmunds' *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*. I have imposed a limited responsibility on myself. I present here a torn page only.

The New Testament was constructed on the dramatisation of what are generally known as the Old Testament prophecies. So that the good old Father Origen, when controverting the anti-Christian Jew Celsus, gave it out in so many words that he was more concerned with the Scriptures than with history. And the Hebrew scriptures alone do not suffice. Not only *ideas* but the very *texts* of Buddhist scriptures have been incorporated in the Gospels and the Evangelist did not make a secret of it. Two such passages, the credit of the discovery of which is due to Mr. Edmunds, are here discussed. The following is found in John 7[38]: "He that believeth on me, *as the Scripture hath said*, out of his belly shall flow the rivers of loving water." And about Tathágata we read: "From his lower body proceeds a torrent of water."* The scholars have been struck by the similarity. For us the force has been lost in translation. But the almost verbal agreement has left a message of its own. We find in the gospel, "*as the Scripture hath said.*" What Scripture? Such a scholar as Dean Alford in utter despair remarks: "We look in vain for such a text in the Old Testament." (*The Open Court*, 1911). The Buddhist Scripture must have been well known at the time. The striking resemblance indicates that much.

The other verse also is equally telling. "The multitude therefore answered him, *We have heard out of the law* (Scripture) that the Christ abideth for ever" [for the æon=*kalpa*] John 12[34]. The Buddhist

* The Pali text is: "Hetthimakáyato udakadhárá pavattati" *Patisombhidamagga*, 1[53]. Cp. also *Sumangala-Vilásini*, vol. I, p. 57. Taking this or mistaking it in the literal sense water has actually been made to flow from Jesus body when speared on the cross. But this is a different tale to be told in its proper place.

text is: "if he so should wish, *the Tathágata could remain* [on earth] *for the aeon* or rest of the æon".* The only comment to be made is that the Old Testament here also does not help us out of "the law". The plea of the community of oriental ideas does not mend matters, as both the passages have got a secret meaning. From the reference to Law and Scripture the inference is irresistible that the passages existed at that age available to the evangelist in some sacred literature. Even the multitude were familiar with one of them. What literature?—that is the question. "The only known source of the two quoted texts," concludes Mr. Edmunds, "is the Buddhist Canon, which in the first Christian century was the most wide-spread of all Sacred Codes." If Dr. Carpenter is still unconvinced it is because he will not cease to persist in what they call kicking against the pricks (Vide *Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 180).

The gospels taught that a man was defiled not by what he ate but what came out of his heart; and the things that defile are "evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings". *Matt.* 15[19]. In the *Sutta-Nipáta* six verses describe how a bad mind and wicked deeds defile a man exactly in the same way, of which the first verse (S. N., 241, V. Fausboll's translation) is: 'Destroying living beings, killing, cutting, binding, stealing, speaking falsehood, fraud and deception, worthless reading, † intercourse with another's wife', these defile and not the eating of flesh. I do not know whether this can be set down as mere coincidence. No, this is no mere coincidence. Jesus was brought up under the Jewish Law which ordained defilement by eating certain things and this Law, Jesus declared, he came not to destroy but to fulfil. The principle of defilement he preached was a direct violation of God's Law. "If Jesus's principle was true, then the Law was wrong" (*The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 48). So opines a Jewish authority. Whence then Jesus got his new principle? The reply is not far to seek, if we compare his articles of defilement with those of

* "A´kámkhamáno A´nanda Tathágato kappam vátittheyya kappavasesam váti." Maháparinibbána-Sutta 3[3]. There is absolutely no doubt that both the verses have got a mystic significance only. Therefore, it is all the more probable that one party has borrowed from the other.

† 'Ajjhena kujjam.' Mr. Lillie translates 'evil thought'. He seem to be nearer the mark, though Fausboll is head and shoulders above him is scholarship. With the assistance of a respected friend without whose ready help the Pali reference would have been next to impossible for me to find out, I have consulted commentaries and a Pali dictionary and have come to the conclusion that the text is more consonant with *speaking* than *reading*. It may mean evil teaching—teaching what is not true. Does it mean *hiding the real meaning*?

the *Suttanipáta.* The nominal differences do not count as they can be set down to the credit of errors that must crop up in translation and transcription. The gospels say, Jesus came to fulfil. This too, unfortunately, has a Buddhistic suggestion. We read in Rhy Davids' *Buddhism* that Gautama advised his disciples "to say that the Buddha was only trying to preach righteousness, as former Buddhas had done." The Buddha like Christ after him exhorted the disciples to be up and doing when he was in their midst as "hard is it to meet with a Buddha in the world." And both of them are made to utter extemporaneous verses of highly finished quality. There is another very important topic to take into consideration. We have already referred to the episode of the *penitent* thief and have said that the gospel thief is only an imitation of the robber *Angulimála* whom the Buddha converted with a few words (*Supra* p. 204). Now in the *Open Court* of 1914, Mr. Edmunds discovered the motive by which Luke was actuated to defy his authorities, because both Mark and Matthew say that both the thieves reviled Jesus. Mr. Edmunds' argument is this : This is a canon of the Gospel criticism that when Luke differs from others he does do to serve some purpose. He does not care for history ; * at least for his authorities. Robinson Smith and other scholars have established this canon by their penetrating research. The motive here is the same as persuaded the interpolator to introduce the verse : "Father ! forgive them." Luke was an Antioch physician. Being a medical man he necessarily knew of India, the ancient home of medical knowledge. This great international metropolis was not unvisited by Buddhistic missionaries. And there is no doubt about the trade relation. King Kanishka's coins bearing the Buddha on the reverse must have exerted curiosity on the mind of Luke, he being a religiously inclined man, to know about the great Teacher. In the Eastern part of the Parthian Empire there were Buddha-temples with scenes of his life sculptured on them, one of the leading characters being a penitent thief ; and from the second century B. C. in the Great Tope of Ceylon also at the opening of which men came "from Alexandria, the city of the Greeks." Moreover, the Buddhist Scriptures were translated in the vernaculars of the Parthian Empire. And the Parthians were present at the Pentecost (see *Acts* ii) Now it is for the reader to determine whether the Gentile Evangelist when confronted

Angulimála.

* For Lucan mendacity see Robinson Smith's *Solution of the Synoptic Problem* pp. 18—35. In his *The Acts of the Apostles* Harnack devotes 28 pages to a list of Lk.'s inaccuracies and discrepancies in the gospel alone.

on all sides by a religion of love and forgiveness had sufficient motive, as was his wont, to introduce Angulimála and the 'forgiveness' verse into his narrative though thereby directly contradicting Mark and Matthew.

Take the parable of the laid-up treasure dealt with in *Matt.* 6[19-20] which corresponds to the stored portion (*nidhi*) in the Khuddaka Patha, viii. But the "treasures in heaven" of the Bible easily lends itself to an other-worldly interpretation in consonance with ever-recurrent Biblical passages. The Buddha is clear in demarcating between the temporal and spiritual treasures—the one kind is easily destroyed, but the other acquired by disciplining the character stands a man in good stead for ever. The whole thing has been described in sixteen beautiful verses, one or two *padas* of which I cannot resist the temptation to quote in the original Páli. About the earthly treasures the Buddha says: '*nāgā vā apanīmenti*' or '*yakkhā vā pi haranti nam*'; their very nature is: '*Sabbam etam vinassati.*' The other treasure is to be acquired both by men and women:—

'*Yassa dānena silena samyamena dānena cha*'. Quite opposite is its nature. Its characteristic is '*achoraharano nidhi*' (thieves can not steal) or '*eso nidhi sunihito ajeyyo*' (cannot be snatched away), '*anugamiko*' (follows the possessor wherever he goes). And '*esa devamanussānām sabbakāmodādo* or '*Sabbam eteno labbhati.*'

By the way, we may remark that the Buddha insists in these verses on one's duties towards father, mother and brothers, by performing which this higher kind of treasure is acquired; but the gospels have no duty to them to enjoin, rather its opposite. No wonder. their anti-social injunctions have been flouted throughout the ages, as the world still endures (Vide *supra* pp.

If it may not, at this stage, be insisted upon that Jesus made use of old materials without acknowledgment, and, for the matter of that, the finest feathers in Christianity's cap are after all only borrowed plumes, the conviction cannot be avoided that the claim of Christ's originality and "uninventibility" is gone. In a vastly elaborate and dignified form he was anticipated in Hindustan by several centuries. The Centinary Forward Movement should take note of this fact that without an insolent effrontery it can not say: "India's hope, individual and national, lies in accepting Christ" (*Modern Review*, August, 1923). We put this question to the gentlemen of the Mission whether they are serious or merely bluffing. Can they tell us positively that the precious commodity they are so gratuitously thrusting upon India has produced salvation in Europe both individual and national? Let Mr. H. G. Wells and others who possess his mental and moral

calibre and have enough intellectual acumen to fully discern which way the wind blows, as well as moral stamina to dare the proverbial Christian charity, reply ! For ourselves we, with the only change of the *dramatis personae*, simply repeat what under a parallel circumstance Gerald Friedlander said to Montefiore: It seems to me, that the Centenary Forward Movement's attempts to persuade the Indians to believe in "the most powerful personality" of the Jesus of the Gospels and "the supreme character of history" (M. R., March and June, 25) is an indication, either that the Movement is totally unaware of the present crisis in the Christian Church, due to the failure of the theologians to discover the historic Jesus; or that it must imagine Indians to be in the blissful ignorance of this crisis. The Movement is acting like certain creatures when pursued by their enemies. What a 'powerful personality' in bringing about changes in human hearts ? Did not Disraeli, hearing of the atrocities perpetrated by the British in India after the Sepoy Mutiny, exclaim in despair: "We (the British), instead of bowing before Jesus, are preparing to revive the worship of Moloch" ? (p. 55, *The Other Side of the Medal* by Mr. Edmund Thompson). Excellent certificate this for the saving capacity of Christ who is thrust upon us as our saviour. Is Christianity doing better a hundred years afterwards ? "Nation and Athenaeum" (c. Nov. 1926) published a questionaire among its enlightened readers to test the public opinion on the position of Christianity with the consequence that 52 per cent do not believe in immortality; 60 per cent do not believe in a personal God; 70 per cent deny the divinity of Christ; 71 per cent deny to the Bible any special inspiration; and 48 per cent do not believe in Christianity in any form. On the other hand, in the computation, a short while ago, of M. Leon de Rosny "there were 20000 Buddhists in Paris alone" (Arthur Lillie, *Buddha and Buddhism*, p. vii). When all these facts of the Christian position even in the so-called Christendom are taken into consideration, much water will, as a matter of course, find its way into the wine of the Christian enthusiasm for propagating Christianity among non-Christian peoples. In reply to the question, "why not more clergy candidates?" Dr. Barnes, the Bishop of Birmingham, says that it is due to "a profound reluctance among educated people in England to assent wholeheartedly to the doctrines of Christianity". The remedy lies in the presentation of Christianity "in the light of fuller knowledge" (*The Inquirer*, p. 322, May 29, 1926). Christ's saviourship is being repudiated everywhere. A most up-to-date verdict on the subject is passed by Mr. Jerome K. Jerome. In his view, for the good

Influence of Christ.

of mankind "the idea that Christ was sent into the world to be the scape-goat for our sins is not helpful......but a 'stumbling block." (*The Statesman*, 28-3-28). If Christ will save India who then comes to the rescue of the Christ himself. Saviour, save thyself !

However, the above is not the only incident of the Buddha's life that inspired Luke to incorporate it in order to improve upon the life of Jesus. The influence of Buddha-legends on the gospel-making, especially on Luke, may at present be taken as ancient history, though some, even now, ostrich-like blink at the fact. Dr. Carpenter believes that "the essential features of the story of Gotama were well established centuries before the birth of Jesus, but", he contends without the least shadow of a justification, "there is no definite trace of their transmission to the West" (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 101). The contention has no legs to stand upon. He enumerates many parallel incidents (p. 100). I here notice only a couple or two. "Some eminent Brahman, hearing of his fame, sends one or two of his own disciples to enquire if he is really the Blessed Buddha. The question is exactly parallel to that which the Baptist, through two of his followers, puts to Jesus, 'Art *thou* he that should come, or do we look for another ?' Then Gotama engages them in an earnest talk, and by his wisdom [Jesus by his miracles] convinces them that he is in truth the Enlightened One ; and sometimes, ere they depart, he reveals to them the mystic marks." Of the *mystic marks* we have already spoken. Curiously enough the Messiahship in both the cases is justified on the same principle. When the Buddha incarnated himself in his mother's womb "the blind received their sight ; the deaf heard ; the dumb spoke ; the crooked became straight ; the lame walked ; all prisoners were freed from their bonds ; in each hell the fire was extinguished ; the wild animals ceased to be afraid ; the illness of the sick was allayed ; all men began to speak kindly" (*Buddhist Birth-stories* translated by J. W. R. Davids, vol. i, p. 64 as quoted by Carpenter, *Ibid* p. 121). And John's disciples were told "how that the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them" (*Luke* 7[22]). It goes without saying that these performances are allegorical in *Isaiah* and majority of the enlightened writers interpret them figuratively. But the evangelists through ignorance apply them to their fictitious hero as real incidents of his life. The King Bimbisára of Magadha paid his respects to Gautama Buddha in company of learned Brahmins. Such a regal reverential treatment of the Master should not be wanting in the case of Jesus too. He can not yield his palm to any great man in the world. At

least with this idea the gospellers proceeded to manufacture their hero. So King Herod, though dead years before the Christian era, has been forced to that service. Herod advised "the wise men and learned of them" to search out Jesus that he too might "come and worship him" (*Matt.* 2^{2}). This is no imitation ! No, never !

Another incident is this : "On his [Buddha's] name-day [*námakarana* ceremony. In the case of Jesus on the day of presentation of the child in the temple after circumcision—parallelism can not be made more perfect taking the diverse customs of the two lands into consideration] a venerable sage like Simeon in the temple foretold his future greatness." This is found only in *Luke* 2^{25}. Now here is the last one Carpenter alludes to : "Before his [Buddha's] death (which he predicts) he passes through a kind of transfiguration, and a great earthquake testifies to the sympathy of nature when he departs" (p. 101). We find transfiguration in the case of Moses also. Myths are surely multifocal. Both these incidents, however, are recorded in the gospels about Jesus. Here we repeat, for Dr. Carpenter's conviction, what we have already said that both Max Muller and Rhys Davids are convinced of the intercommunication between Alexandria and India at the time of the gospel-writing. And Dr. Carpenter is not unaware of his peril. He himself, when speaking of the message delivered to us by the edicts of Aśoka, points out in his last book (1923, *Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 153): "Most interesting is Asoka's claim to have sent "envoys" (were they ambassadors or missionaries) to Hellenic kings in Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia and Epirus". What a predicament ? For want of a more reliable subterfuge Dr. Carpenter has been obliged to attach no more value to the edict than what he pleases to call "an Oriental flourish" ? However much he may try to minimise to his Christian audience the effect of this information, this mute evidence of rocks and pillars is too loud to be suppressed by any shilly-shallying with concrete historical facts. These Aśokan edicts give us "definite trace" of the transmission which the Unitarian doctor wanted in his earlier work of the Buddha's life and teachings to the West a couple of centuries before the Christian era.

In Buddhistic symbolism the sea or the stream is typified as the place of stress and storm which one must pass in order to attain salvation. This imagery we find in the famous Naassene Hymn (see *infra* Chap. xii) also. This is called *Samsára*. From *Buddhist Suttas* we learn that one day the Buddha came to the Ganges with his disciples. There the multitude sought to cross with rafts—प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा—मुण्डक: i.e., by means of rites and ceremonies. But the Buddhist Way was the only

boat by which the stream could be forded. So the Blessed one leaving the multitude behind "vanished from this side of the river, and stood on the further bank with the company of the brethren" (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi, p. 21). The Evangelists had access to this material but, as was their wont, turned the symbol into an actual incident: unless, of course, they too are to be taken symbolically thereby giving a go-by to the Biblical historicity altogether. We read in *Mark* 6^{45}: "And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the boat and to go before him into the other side to Bethsaida while he himself sendeth the multitude away." Now when in the evening boat was distressed by waves in the midst of the sea and they could not themselves manage as the wind was contrary, Jesus came up to them into the boat walking on the sea. Then the wind ceased and they crossed to the land on the other side. (Vide *Matt.* 14^{22}, and in another form *Luke* 8^{22} and *Mark* 5^{35}). But the Master's personal help is not always necessary, faith is sufficient. The following story is told of a disciple of Buddha: One day going to Jetavana (where the Teacher was staying) to hear the Truth, he came in the evening to the bank of the River Aciravati. When he reached the landing place, however, he saw no boat; so taking a joyful confidence in the Buddha, he went down into the stream. His feet did not sink in the water. Walking as on the ground, by the time he got into the middle he saw waves. Then his confidence in the Buddha became slack, and his feet began to sink. But he made his joyful confidence in the Buddha firm, and, proceeding on the surface of the water, came to Jatavana (*F. Th. Gos.*, p. 182.) Now, no comment would be required to understand what our contention is, if we simply refer to what happened to Peter, the Evangelist's *Narottama* or *Nandaghosha* * when he wanted to reach Jesus crossing the sea. It is related by Matthew only in continuation of his foregoing story: And Peter went down from the boat and walked upon the waters to come to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

If there is any difference between the two narratives, it is the difference between the view-points of the two religions as to self-help and help from God.

* यत किछु पाप' नरोत्तमे चाप' or यत दोष नन्दघोष as the Bengali saying goes—meaning that all omissions and commissions must be laid at the door of some particular typical person—the scapegoat for the time being.

CHAPTER XII.

Foundation Pillars of the Historicity of Jesus.

When Rájá Rámmohun Roy offered his *Precepts of Jesus* to an unprepared world, he was savagely handled by the missionaries and their associates of Serampore, a village near Calcutta—an early seat of the missionary activities in Bengal. The Christian charity of the defenders of the crude orthodoxy of the time went so far as to call him *Antichrist* for the supreme fault of his making the pioneer efforts of guiding his fellow beings to peace and happiness through the natural channels of moral and spiritual principles divested of their supernatural appendages. The custodians of the traditional religion were not ready for such a cataclysm ! The world knows it only to-day, but the great Rájá knew it a century ago,—a century that has added more to the stock of human knowlege than all other centuries put together, as Dr. Henry Drummond has put it—that in the age of scientific culture already ushered in by the Baconian methods of Induction, an unsophisticated heart would refuse to be saved by the blood of the Innocent. Science and supernatural go ill together. Lest the kernal also should be cast away with the husk, he separated the moral from the supernatural. The Rájá was persuaded as has been admitted much later by Edward Clodd in his *Jesus of Nazareth*, "that reverence for his character and sympathy with his teaching are unaffected by the rejection of the mythical and speculative elements which have mingled with the narratives of his life, and from which supernatural theories about him have been deduced." However, the ashes of the Rájá were barely cold, when Lord Northbrook's *Teachings of Jesus in His Own Words* saw the light with the admission that his Lordship's inspiration came from the great Oriental. Surely, the shades of the missionaries turned in their dark graves when the booklet came out ! There is such a curious thing as nature's retribution and this much can be admitted without being charged with superstition, as J. S. Mill has said. Only the other day Dr. Howels, the present occupant of the Serampore *gadi*, proclaimed from the housetop : "I am now convinced my predecessors were wrong."* Of all logics the logic of necessity is the most convincing. The supernatural Christ has become quite untenable. And the matter could not stand where Rámmohun left it. In this world of change and progress nothing is stationary.

Necessity of the position.

* Speech in Rámmohun Memorial meeting at Ranchi, 1914, and in another similar meeting latterly. More than a score years ago the present writer entered the lists on certain points of Christian mysteries. Mr. Howels, then of the Cuttack mission, advised

To-day the situation has been so altered that the ethical separated from the mythical will not save the face. "For example", Prof. Schmiedel affirms in his preface to the *Jesus* of Dr. Arno Neumann, "moral precepts which in themselves might justify no suspicion against the historical character of the person to whom they are attributed could yet very easily be put into the mouth of a purely invented and in no sense historical Jesus." The Professor * is in search of passages "derogatory" even to the character of an ordinary man, what of a "Superman" as Jesus is claimed to be—so tottering is the edifice at its very foundation. These passages he calls "foundation pillars" of the historicity of Jesus, evidently because he would use them to prop up the crumbling edifice. But he has been forced to that position by the utter helplessness of the cause. And this is due to the persistent nature of a certain theological temper. Each abandoned position was at the outset defended with the same freshness and fierceness. It began with the defence of the "real presence" of the very God living and moving and weeping with us, but it now ends in being contented with the minimum of creed—the bare personal existence of a mere man. M. Loisy is quite satisfied that there was a Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, a "worker in wood, carpenter, furniture-maker, wheel-wright" (vide, *The Historical Jesus*, p. 143). Not a very happy method—to proceed from the supernatural to the ethical, and then from the ethical to the non-ethical. But that is the logic of necessity. Something must be found to support it, however preconceived a notion it may be. Schmiedel himself admitted (1906) that "for about six years the view that Jesus never really lived has gained an ever-growing number of supporters" and added that "it is no use to ignore it, or to frame resolutions against it." Because the Fourth Gospel is gone. The Synoptics with the *Acts* are fairly on the way of going. It is an open secret among the Biblical scholars that the *Acts of the Apostles* is not an original

Acts unhistorical.

him to engage, instead of spending his time in such fruitless controversies, in popularising Christianity following in the footsteps of the Rájá. The Rájá was more truely a Christian than the missionaries in general, as he said.

* Dr. Smith points out that the process began still earlier. Schmiedel only pushed it to its furthest limit. Mr. Lester in his *Historic Jesus* argues that the baptism of Jesus by John must be an historical fact as it subordinates him to John, so could not be invented. But the Baptist is made the forerunner (that is also remembering a text of the Old Testament) to acclaim the Messiah saying "there cometh one mightier than I after me the latchet of whose shoes, I am not worthy to unloose". So the argument of subordination does not stand.

treatise. Both Eusebius and Origen refer to an uncanonical *Acts of Paul.* There may have been such an *Acts of Peter* also. They were simply pre-Christian propagandists (s. p. 160) of expectant Messianic Judaism (*Origins of Christianity* p. 80). They left diaries of their itineracy which Luke manipulated and modified for edification. His object was historical too! He wrote for the purpose of "sacred history" of which another name is "pious fraud". In this Christianised form the book easily obtained canonisation. And there is nothing to wonder at it. If I were given a free hand with Swami Vivekánanda's writings, I could in no time turn him into an orthodox Bráhma Missionary and not a mere heretic. Luke is looked upon by many as a historian. But Dr. Von Soden pronounces the *Acts* to be quite the opposite of it. "The conversion of Paul is thrice narrated (Chaps. 9, 22, 26) with striking differences which seem to give no trouble to the author. All these things and much besides are only intelligible on the supposition that the author is moved by no kind of historical interest in the scenes which he discribes" (*Early Christian Literature*, p. 221). Further on he remarks: "The book is not a historical work but an apology for Christianity set forth in historical pictures. In it every conceivable charge against Christianity is proved to be unjustified and a claim is asserted to the same protection and the same freedom which were assured to the Jewish religion in the Roman State, seeing that it is shown that Christianity is nothing else than the fulfilment of the Jewish religion rightly understood" (pp. 234-235). So the situation is so very bad for historicity that "the advance would not be so very great if the whole record of Jesus' life were referred to the domain of myth" (J. M. C., p. 13). This is Schmiedel's considered opinion. Yet he himself will not fail to emphasise a trait of Jesus' character as depicted in this confused mass of writings called the gospels, if it suits his convenience, so casting consistency to the four winds, though he admits that every word in them has been put to Jesus' mouth. This is the influence of tradition that flouts logic and is hard to shake off. Otherwise it is a well attested fact that there is nothing in the gospels that indisputably brings us into contact with a real personage. From birth to death all are myths. On the other hand, ransack the whole record and you find not a particular aspect of human interest that gives reality to the story as to which it can be said of Jesus as is said of the Athenian sage that "it was Socrates who inspired the first efforts to think systematically about the moral life in a form that had historical

Newness of N. T. repudiated.

continuity and a pervading influence upon all subsequent speculation" (Arthur Kenyon Rogers in the *Philosophical Review*, March, 1925). Surely on such hard rocks historicity is based. Failing this, theologians have fallen back upon the denunciation of the opponents. Schmiedel more than any body else among the theologians has clearly perceived that something more solid must be supplied—more solid than the angry outbursts from the vanquished theologians, to prop up the wellnigh demolished structure. As this is the case, some makeshifts must be improvised. So the *pillars*. But scholars, no less scholarly than himself, are of opinion that the "pillars" do not serve the purpose to which they have been pressed, as ancient texts bear many interpretations According to Prof. W. B. Smith most of them can be interpreted without lowering the status of Jesus.*

Genesis of Pillars.

The central idea of the Pillars is that the texts selected are not consistent with the reverence in which Jesus is held in the gospels. So, had they not been historical they would not have been incorporated in them. It is, under the circumstances, absolutely absurd that the evangelists invented them. But are the interpretations acceptable? On this Schmiedel stakes the whole case. The question can only be decided by handling the Pillars themselves. The first pillar to oppose the artillery of criticism is *Mk.* 3[21], where Jesus' mother, brothers and relatives call him "mad". We are not at all surprised at it. Because the gospellers have shown inveterate tendency to present Jesus in the garb of the Old Testament Messiah. In the book of *Wisdom* 5[5], *Zechariah* 8[3] and *Psalms* 69[8] the Prophet is represented as one evil spoken of by "his father and his mother" that begot him and his "brethren" and "mother's children." The term "mad" may also indicate that the hero is too high to be appreciated by his contemporaries, or it may mean the justification of the proverb that the prophet is not honoured in his own country. So, the apparent depreciation signifies a real appreciation. Dr. Smith by textual analysis has shown that when symbolically explained—and according to him, if not explained in that way it gives no sense—it is not derogatory to a god. Cp. *Ecce Deus*, pp. 190—193. Do not Lucan legends furnish enough grounds for belief that Mary knew from before the conception that a divine son was coming to her? Then how would one take this verse

Schmiedel's interpretations unacceptable.

* Robertson's *Christianity and Mythology* and *Jesus Problem*, Lublinski's *Das W. Dogma*, Steudel's *Im Kampf Um Die*, Drews' *Witnesses* and Smith's *Ecce Deus* have shattered the pillars to pieces.

at its face value ? This lends support to Dr. Smith's view that there is a hidden meaning. The second is in *Mk.* 10^{18} where Jesus declines to be called "good master." Though in the present form of the gospels of *Mark* and *Matthew* in English translation we find the same thing, the Greek text of the latter, scholars let us know, has different versions. In the Hebrew version the reply means, "Why asketh thou me about the good ? One is good" and not, "Why callest thou me good"? And when the historical evolution of the text is taken into consideration and its pre-Schemiedel interpretations, the pillar crumbles to pieces. Justin sees in it the Saviour's lowliness and modesty, and other apostolic Fathers read in the reply: "That man rightly calls me good, for I am God." Dr. Smith comparing various text authorities, manuscripts, versions and citations shows that the verse was from Diogenes Laertius : "One is the good, though called by many names." It first passed from Greek to Syriac and then from Syriac to Greek again. So in course of time the form has been changed. (E. D. p. 196). However, the Fathers drew quite the opposite conclusion. Who will decide that they were wrong and Schemiedel is right ? If there is any disclaimer here, it is "in contradistinction from the goodness of God" And Jesus was not worshipped always as identified with the One Supreme God. Many worshipped him as a mode or aspect of this God. So a worshipper can with a clear conscience write this passage. The one other (3rd) passage, "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him" *Mt.* 12^{32}, *Lk.* 12^{10}. There is scarcely any fault to find here because beginning with Génébrand in 1569 down to Welhausen all critics make the term mean simply *man*. The latter takes "Whatever is said by man." to be the original reading. Jesus did not call himself the Son of Man. This is the considered opinion of many Biblical Scholars.

About the other (4th) pillar *Mk.* 13^{32}, *Mt.* 24^{36} : "But concerning that day or that hour knows no one, neither the angels in heaven nor the son, except the Father." Many manuscripts omit "nor the son" thereby removing the pillar altogether. But as Jesus places himself above the *angels in heaven*, this pillar turns a hostile witness attesting the divinity or not-humanity of the Son. The pillar gives in even before it is touched. Here is a clear case to prove how freely the gospellers handled the materials at their disposal. And it refutes the whole series of Schmiedel's argument. Mark and Matthew give the passage, Luke and John withholding. They are all supposed to know it. Then why this difference ? Because what seems inconsistent to one set of people is not necessarily inconsistent to others. The

docetic hands in *Mark* and *Matthew* found nothing wrong to record it as it fulfilled a prophecy. But the others were not of the the same philosophical school professing the same theology. Therefore they introduced other themes that suited them best. So there is much force in the following utterance of Dr. Smith: "No Evangelist hesitates for a moment, if it suits his own purpose, to modify or even to reverse the statement of any or all of the others." (*Ecce Deus*, p. 187.) This can happen only when the writer is fully conscious that he is handling a myth and not an historical event; he is writing for edification and not reporting an actual occurrence. They were consciously theologising a fiction. The fifth pillar is Jesus' inability to perform any miracle in Nazareth on account of the unbelief of his countrymen (*Mark* 6[5]). The story simply tells us that Jesus made not the slightest impression on his own kinsmen and fellow-villagers. But as soon as the carpenter's son leaves the village he is hailed as a Superman—whomsoever he commands, he implicitly follows him. Excellent history this! A prophet may not have honour in his birth place, a successful physician certainly has. And if Jesus is anything in the gospels, he is a great healer. It is for cures and cures only that people "believed" him in other places. Perhaps Nazareth was a healthy place! I do not know what the Hebrew or Greek text can be made to yield. But to read between the line it means that Jesus was rejected by his village. And this rejection had a purpose. First, as a move in the anti-Docetic direction. Jesus is introduced by Mark as a Divine Being, as if suddenly dropped from heaven. Secondly, to develop the anti-Judaic element in the gospel, a beginning is made at home. Moreover, Mark is out to prove that mountains can be removed by faith. Therefore it is a small matter for him to give out that the miracles could not be performed because of unbelief. This is the negative way of glorifying his "faith". So there is nothing inconsistent. And the evangelists do not care a fig for inconsistencies and contradictions, absurdities and impossibilities. Except that the passage scandalises the Nazarethians, there is no obstacle in the way of its being invented. The sixth Pillar is Jesus' cry of despair on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? * (*Matthew* 27[46]). That two gospels do not give

* I remember, the late Rev. Kálicharan Banerji once expressed his inability to explain how Christ could utter it. One need not feel troubled to explain this, it is not a fact of actual life! Dr. Schweitzer has shown that the *cry* is destructive of any Messianic claim which Jesus assumed at some period of his career and even Schmiedel could not deny it (*The Quest* p. 284). Following in the wake of Schmiedel Dr. Carpenter remarks: No mystery play, investing its hero with a halo of dignity,

the verse is a sufficient refutation of the Professor's standpoint, and the guarantee that it was invented lies in its harmony with Old Testament declarations, the elaboration of which is the one supreme aim that runs through the gospels. "As he (author of the primitive gospels) wished to describe Jesus", says Steudel in his *Im Kampf*, "as the 'suffering' servant' * of Psalm xxii, he could not hesitate for a moment to put in his mouth as a prayer the quotation in question. Whether the figure which," Steudel continues, "he built up was consistent or not gave very little concern to the author": (*Witnesses*, p. 151). And the exact words of the quotation are found in the *Psalm* together with all the details of the crucifixion—the soldiers gambling for the raiments not exempted. Let contradictions and discordances take care of themselves, to make the Messiah as vivid and attractive as possible according to Old Testament expectations was their ideal, a huge *petitio principii* runs through Schmiedel's position. If historicity were proved already independently, then these details could be invoked both for or against a thesis. But to go to prove it from the contradictions, real or apparent, is to be entangled in a vicious circle—to assume what

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would have ascribed to him for his last words the passionate cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me' ? (F. T. G. p. 338). When the Doctor will remember that this is exactly the utterance of a more mysterious 'Crucified' in the Old Testament he will not raise this question. (But the mystery is now solved. See *Witnesses* p 312). The gospel authors and their interpolators can not miss such a fine opportunity. However, the venerable theologian forgets his own findings earlier in the book. He agrees with Prof. Sanday that the "the Gospels grew up in the dark" (p. 6) and "the Synoptic narratives present to us the Jesus of ecclesiastical belief, the idealised Christ as he was interpreted and received now by one party, now by another" (p. 57). Nothing stands in our way, now, to accept the view that the cry is a handiwork of the original mystery play.

* In an interpolated part of the *Didache* (*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*) an originally pre-Christian Jewish document (so accepted even by the orthodox), adapted and gradually added to by early Jesuists who did not deify Jesus—we find, "Jesus thy Servant". So also in *Acts* 3^{13}, 3^{20}, 4^{27}, 4^{30}. The pre-Christian origin of *Didachi* is confirmed by so orthodox an authority as Dr. F. Crawford Burkitt too : "Biographical interest in Christ is completely absent, even more completely absent than it is from the letters of S. Paul ; for aught that appears in the Didache, Jesus of Nazareth might never have been crucified" (*The Gospel History and its Transmission*, p. 272).

Crucifixion an addition.

By implication it is proved that the primitive Christianity as illustrated by Paul's Epistles and *Didachi* began without the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Dr. Drews also holds that *Didachi* is, "according to Harnack and other, an originally Jewish work, which was afterwards, somewhat superficially, Christianised." *Witnesses*' p. 223)

is to be proved. On such an infirm logic no scientific discussion can proceed. Of the other pillars the less said, the better—frivolus as they are on the very face of them. As to them, "the bearing of Professor Schmiedel's text is" says Mr. Robertson in his *Jesus Problem*, (p. 198), "so much a matter of arbitrary interpretation that the debate is otiose, and in yet others," he adds, "there are insoluble questions of text corruption." Verily, the Professor is building on foundationless pillars, because they are "ingenious discoveries of a theologian, masterpieces of apologetic hairsplitting", as Steudel has put it. However, the discussion reveals that the theologian has beaten a hasty retreat from his original position of hyperboles with all its fighting equipments, and in order to cover the retreat has abjectly changed the front. We have all along been treated to the thesis of "unique and effulgent personality" and such other exaggerations. But from the sublime we are now suddenly hurled headlong into the abyss of the ridiculous! We are invited to believe that Jesus lived, because in some episodes of his life he was taken to be less than are ordinary human being, sometimes a maniac. One simple question, however, shows up the utter hollowness of the new line of defence: Are the derogatory episodes compatible with the supernatural epithets found in the gospels? If not, a clear case is made out for the former being interpolations. If it is contended that, as interpolations even, they imply a real knowledge of his life and action, then one is tempted to observe that there are such episodes in the lives of wellknown mythological personages, for instance, Sree Ráma and Herakles, but these did not stand in the way of their being deified and worshipped as Gods by millions for ages together. Will any informed and unprejudiced critic condescend on that score to admit their historicity? So derogatory episodes in an ancient narrative do not stand in the way of the personage being regarded as superhuman. As, on the other hand, the pre-Christian Jewish Messiah was conceived as a suffering one and all the Pagan Christs were suffering Gods, these derogatory epithets, if really so, do not bear the connotation Prof. Schmiedel pleases to force into them. And as, we have already indicated it, these episodes were invented for special purposes, the Professor's theory altogether falls to the ground. Really Prof. Schmiedel labours under many difficulties. First the Pillar passages might have been misinterpreted and misunderstood at the outset and then allowed to remain as something the meaning of which is not intelligeble. This is an ordinary phenomenon with the sacred literature. There are such passages in the Vedas, Bible and many other scriptures. Secondly, his major premise is faulty. He has assumed an affirmative

universal which is always very hard to establish by induction. How can he prove that nineteen hundred years ago in the case of a motley crowd of Greeks and Jews, these ideas, taking him by his interpretation, should have struck inconsistent to their idea of divinity when even to-day what seems to be *undivine* to one divine is quite acceptable to others. Thirdly, he has not proved that the passages formed parts of the original gospels, he only assumes them as in this case they serve his purpose. He has not exhibited that critical acumen here as in most other cases which has made his *Gospels* an object of admiration to all. Even if they belonged to them, what of that? They can have been said to any one of the thousand Rabbis then living. Fourthly, as we have shewn already, if in hundred cases the gospellers modified the texts, added, altered, revised and cancelled—who would hold their hands if they used their discretion in these few, very few cases. "Consider the Resurrection and Ascension, note the radical divergence of Luke and *Acts* from the rest in the all-important matter of topography. Behold how John develops the Lazarus of Luke and transforms a parable into a history. Think of the hopeless diversity of form and of context in the story of anointing of the Jesus. Compare Matthew's Sermon on the mount with Luke's Sermon in the plain. So on throughout. It is plain as day that the Gospel writers have felt themselves wholly untrammelled either by tradition or by precedent" (E. D. p 186). Has it not been proved beyond all cavil that the Bible was written by mixed hands? One may not agree with Paulsen "that God's life is not without inner conflict." But it is neither logic nor psychology to think that these mixed multitudes of Greek-Roman-Egyptian-Syrian—Judean amalgam could not attribute contrarious things to their deities. If gods or demi-gods were conceived as half-man and half-beast where is the difficulty that these passages could not have been written "had the author been thinking of a demi-god" as mythologists were in the habit of doing. This much only is tolerably certain that we with our modern sense of propriety could not have os written. Our *impossibilities* can not with certainty be laid at their door. What with us seems incongruous to the God-idea might not be so with them. Besides, what stood in their way to alter the passages if they seemed incongruous? Schmiedel knows more than anybody else that it is a notorious fact—reference to details I shun as volumes have been written on it—that gospel writers freely handled the materials at their disposal—be they words or deeds of Jesus. They were never in a mood to preserve any passage out of reverence for it. If Jesus's worshippers preserved them we feel no difficulty to believe that the

Gospel discrepancies.

earlier Jesus-worshippers wrote it—human nature does not change radically in a few years. On the other hand, we should not foist our own mode of arguments across the centuries on the organisers of the Christian movement. They had their own mode of argument. They met the difficulty of the nonfulfilment of the prediction of the Lord's second coming in their own way without giving up the divinity of the Lord. In 2 *Peter* 3[4-8] we find "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." Moreover, the status of these passages is also contested. The consensus of opinion among the higher critics is that the divine qualities belong to the primitive stage of the gospel structure, the human are later accretions. What inner obstructions are there to think that these passages were interpolated by humanising interpolators of old. Fifthly, even if his texts could bear the meaning he forced into them, they could stand him in good stead only if brought in to support a conclusion independently arrived at. He does injustice to his thesis by begging the question at every point. He chooses his texts and explains them betraying the consciousness that Jesus was historical, whereas it is these texts that should give the start, according to the thesis, to the idea of historicity. He emphatically says in the *Gospels* (§ 139 (a)) : "If passages of the kind were wholly wanting in them, it would be *impossible* to prove to a sceptic that any historical value whatever was to be assigned to the gospels; he would be in a position to declare the picture of Jesus contained in them to be purely a work of phantasy, and could remove the person of Jesus from the field of history." Now as at best, giving the benefit of the doubt to the wrong side, the texts are found to be of dubious import and as he himself explains away allegorically and spiritually by far the largest part of the texts, he is now convicted out of his own mouth. More so, as in another connection, he equally forcibly declares that if these passages, evidently when interpreted in his own way, are not found : "We can not know how Jesus really lived and worked nor perhaps whether he even lived at all" (*The Johannine Writings* p. 23; cp. also p. 17, *Das V. Evangelicum*). Sixthly, even taking him by his own words, he gives us infinitesimally little that is historically justified. So for a fiction, not to speak of history, the *history* of Jesus that is thus offered us would be an extremely bad fiction, in which even not 5 per cent of what is related can be safely said to be authenticated, and whatever is here authenticated is authenticated as natural for a human being. But no man can guarantee that the gospel accounts in their this attenuated form are actual occurrences of a particular person, the man Jesus.

Such a natural thing for a preacher as the Sermon, a five minutes' discourse as Schmiedel himself tells us (§ 145 a), has been by overwhelming evidence found to be a compilation like *Bhagabat Gitá.*

Fallacy of *modality.*

Seventhly, therefore, *may-be* can not be accepted as *is*. This logical fallacy of *modal* consequence must be avoided as best as one can. It is so very subtle. Whatever force there is in Schmiedel's pillar-hypothesis is derived from this fallacy. It is not contended that any thing corresponding to a myth or allegory would not occur in nature. In our Rádhá-Krishna legends the most important episode is taken to be the *Rásalilá*. Whatever the mythico-poetical fancy has made of it, its foundation is laid deep on a solar myth. On the *Rása-purnimá* day the sun resides in the constellation of *Rádhá* i.e. *Bishákhá* in the Zodiacal Sign of *Libra* or *Scorpionis* and formerly once the vernal equinox fell on that star Vishnu is one of the varying names of the sun and the Krishna cult owes much to this solar Vishnu. Yet Upádhyáya Gour Govinda Roy in his Bengali Life of Krishna has fought for its historicity from the parallelism of the Maypole festival. But Maypole is historical and the Rása is ostensibly a sunmyth. Vrigu's footprints on the Vishnu's breast are the welknown sun-spots. But what a beautiful story has not been spun out of this simple natural phenomenon? Yet there is nothing wrong about it that one man kicked another on the breast. Because there is no bar in nature under ordinary circumstances that certain things could be done by a man two thousand years ago, therefore Jesus did it—may be good as mythology, but it is very bad logic and consequently very shaky basis for history. The foundation pillars now tremble to fall and with them the whole edifice ; and Dr. Schmiedel is about the last pillar of the historicity of Jesus. So one must agree with Drews that the pillars, as a matter of fact, will stand as long as you refrain from putting them to a serious test. If you come closer they dissolve into atoms. They do not require a Samson to bring them with a crash to the ground. Scholars therefore give a go-by to the *pillars*. "Drews and Robertson," says Friedlander, and we should add W. B. Smith also among others, "have demolished these pillars" (*The Sources of the Sermons*, p. xviii). Now one is tempted to concur with Weiss who declares in warning tones that "the work of the theologians is hopeless." Yes, absolutely hopeless because they are out after a Chimera. As Dr. Bergh Van Eysinga, the eminent Dutch scholar, in concluding his excellent treatise on *Radical Views about the New Testament* (p. 121) has pointed out, the gospels are not a history but books of instruction

in doctrine and edification based on an older Gospel of Gnostic origin, the Christians having taken to gospel-making after the Gnostics. So the work of the Synoptics also should be regarded "as an historical embellishment of what was intended at first as a figurative or allegorical narrative which John has once more partially restored to its original character." * Even Conybeare who has supported historicity by all means has had to admit "what is metaphor and allegory in Philo was turned into history by the Christians." (*Myth*, *Magic and Morals*, p, 231)

Prediction of the speedy end.

The consideration of one important point I have postponed till now. It is about the prediction of the speedy end of the world which remains to be fulfilled even after two milleniums. The speed being so slow, some may turn this into a pillar. If not historical, why such a prediction would be attributed to the Master by his admiring disciples? It is an inconvenient passage and it cuts both ways. But it became more so after a reasonable time when the prediction proved false to men of understanding. Of course, there are fanatics who even to-day try to explain away the falsity. Papias thought the destruction of the world was already upon them. Peter explained it by prolonging the years (See above p. 238). "Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch on his way to martyrdom at Rome still sees the world hastening to its end" (*Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 83). On the other hand, the destruction of Pompii was taken to be the beginning of the end. John's long life was considered to be a sign of the expected literal fulfilment of the prediction in the near future. Even when "he indeed died and was buried, but nevertheless was not really dead but slept and breathed in his grave" (Pr. Ch. vol. iv, p. 153 f. n). Such is the force of super-

* Here Doctors differ too hopelessly. Dr. Smith affirms ; "The received notion that in the early Marcan narratives the Jesus is distinctly human, and that the process of deification is fulfilled in John, is precisely the reverse of the truth. In Mark there is really no man at all The Jesus is God, or at least essentially divine, throughout. He wears only a transparent garment of flesh. Mark historicises only. Matthew also historises, and *faintly humanises*. Luke more *strongly humanises*, while John not only *humanises* but begins to *sentimentalise*" *Ecce Deus*, p. 95. Mr. Robertson agrees with Smith. However, that does not affect the conclusion that gospels are *historicisation* of an idea. That verdict is ratified in any case. One thing is evident. In John's Gospel which has been rejected by the consensus of opinions as wholly fabricated, the personality is more striking than in the synoptics that still retain some reputation for being historical. Those who hold that Jesus' *personality* (striking ?) in the gospels is a guarantee of his historicity get an hot answer here and now.

stition. This shows the firm hold the prediction had over the mind of early Christians. The Messiah is not a Messiah unless he gives a plan of the recreation of the world, and there cannot be a recreation unless the old order is entirely demolished. So the prediction of the speedy end of the world is a part and parcel of all Messianic schemes. Consequently those who manufactured the life of Jesus attributed it to their hero as a matter of necessity like miraculous birth and other appendages of the lives of the Saviours and Messiahs. And it was a double necessity for a Jewish Messiah, because the Jewish apocalypse was by this time circulated broadcast in Judea, and this Jewish apocalypse as influenced by Persia was turned into a Christian one. This was the Christian redaction of the Jewish document used and artistically worked up by the Evangelists with the exhortations interpolated into it "to warn the Christians against the seductive influence of those perverters of the people who," observes such an eminent authority as Pfleiderer who supports the view, "might seek, by some kind of Messianic claims, to alienate the Christian Jews from the Church of Jesus and win them for the national movement" (Pr. Ch. vol. ii, p. 68). However, this non-fulfilment of the prediction caused a serious breach between the Jews and the Christians, the latter eventually siding with Rome against the former in their struggle to sever their connection with the Empire. So, instead of proving historicity, the passage betrays its unhistorical character as Pfleiderer points out (Ib. 63). When the prediction proved false beyond redemption. it was too late to remove it from the gospels. In this way inconvenient passages remain in the holy writs. It is for this reason, though the three Evangelists report it, John does not. Because the Fourth gospel was not written before the middle of the 2nd Century as Pfleiderer shows. And by this time all reasonable men already gave up the prophecy as an exploded myth. Then began the mortal conflict between the Jews and the Christians. The influence of a prophet, real or imaginary, is based on the belief of his infallibility. If that is gone, his following falls off and the cause goes to the wall except for the fanatics and for those who have their special axe to grind by his name. Some say, crucifixion of Jesus symbolically presents the rejection of Jesus by the Jews.

Result of its non-fulfilment.

Modern parallel.

The Gándhi movement gives us a most up-to-date illustration of this truth. In a couple of years he has been declared a heretic, and, besides, the matter has proceeded so far that in a public meeting at Bombay (1924) lynching was proposed for him.

CHAPTER XIII.

Biographical Pretensions

1

Dr. Percy Gardner in his *Historic View of the New Testament* most emphatically remarks : "The more closely we examine the documents of early Christianity, the more fully do we acquiesce in the dictum* of Dr. Edersheim that the materials for a life of Jesus in any objective sense do not exist. It will probably always remain an impossibility to set forth even a brief narrative of the founder's life which history can accept as domonstrated fact. Even the chronological skeleton of such a life can not be sketched with certainty." (Popular edition, p. 74). We know M. Loisy, one of the most scholarly Christian theologians, agrees in this view of the evidential value of the gospels which, strained to their utmost, have been reduced to Dr. Schmiedel's "pillar" passages, and these pillars themselves like so many pillars of snow have melted away before the rising sun of further criticism, as shown in the last chapter. Dr. Edersheim himself has offered us a splendid specimen of how, in the confessed absence of objective materials, subjective fancy alone can build up a *life* with stuff evolved out of the depths of one's own consciousness. Beginning with the Evangelists themselves *till* down to our time in the Bráhma Samáj—and when the process will stop God only knows— libraries are being filled up with lives of Christ, though historic materials do not exist. How has this been at all practicable ? The answer comes from one who has studied the question from the psychological standpoint. "As a matter of fact" continues Dr. Gardner, "Christ was born neither at Bethlehem like the mythical Jesus, nor at Nazareth like the historic Jesus [wonderfully historical is the life of one who was never born !], but in the hearts of the pious" (Work cited, p. 127). Historical indeed, to be born in the hearts of the pious from day to day ! There is then meaning in the myth that Christ was begotten by Holy Ghost. It is a psychological puzzle that learned men after enquiry find that no materials exist in the gospel narrative for a biography and yet they write one all the same. Why ? The reason is not far to seek. Vedántaratna Moheschandra

History without objective materials.

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* This confession is in the Preface of *Jesus the Messiah*, in two volumes running to Royal 8vo. 1600 pages which the learned author (supra p. 57) has written as a commentary on *the life and teachings* of Jesus after consulting 400 books in all languages on the subject. A most damaging confession indeed !

Ghosh is not at all guilty of exaggeration when he observes in a similar connection : "Of all the biases, the theological bias is the most dangerous. It makes scholars unscholarly, critics uncritical, the cautious dogmatical, the sober unbalanced and the logical mind illogical" (*The Modern Review*, September 1924). It is this reason alone—the inexorable logic of the fact that no biography is found in the gospels—that has sent the Unitarian wits wool-gathering, and weaving a vicious circle out of the traditional belief in a historical Jesus. Says Dr. Carpenter : "The sublime figure of the Christ, portrayed to us by the First Three Evangelists *was, in a certain sense, created by the Church.* But if, in turn, we ask what was the moral and religious power by which the Church was created, *only one answer is possible* : it was the personality of Jesus, his faith, his truth, his love." *A petitio principii* could not be made more glaring ! Is the venerable theologian unaware that the *vicious circle* he has managed to *weave* (p. 326) lays the axe at the root of his studies in *The First Three Gospels* ? Theology can not give him immunity from this peril. The doctor has chosen a convenient "only one answer" to the question of his own making. But it is unhistorical, to say the least of it. The counter question is : Who was the founder, historically, of the powerful Church of Mithra that, for three long centuries, competed with the Christian Church for supremacy ? Do we not read about personalities of grander *faith, truth and love* in fictions ? Vide *Les Miserables*. Yet, biography or no biography, on the weak string of this narrative are hung unconscionably ponderous claims on behalf of the gospel-Jesus, one of which runs thus : "We do our Master little honour," opines the Rev. Principal E. Griffith Jones in his book, *The Ascent Through Jesus*, "when we place him among a group of teachers competing for the acceptance of men. He is not one of many founders of religions. He is the source and foundation of all, in so far as they have caught a prophetic glimpse of His truth, and anticipated something of his spirit, and given a scattered hint here and there of His secret. He is the truth, the type, the saving grace, of which they faintly and vaguely dreamed ; the Desire of all nations, the Crown and Essence of humanity, the Saviour of the world, who, by the loftiness of His teaching, the beauty of His character, the sufficiency of His atoning sacrifice, is able to save to the uttermost all who will come to Him and trust in Him." One may feel dumb-founded at such a preposterously extravagant effusion, but there is a compensation. An obvious reply has most fittingly come

Theological bias the basis.

Preposterous claims contradicted by history.

from another reverend gentleman who has been moved by the very extravagance of its unhistorical character: "If he alone is the inspiration and energising life of humanity," queries Rev. R. Roberts of Bradford in *Jesus or Christ* (*supra* p. 29), "it is pertinent to ask how came we to have religions, literatures, arts, sciences, philosophies, politics and industries, all the contents of many-sided civilizations, thousands of years before He was born." And history tells us also that most of them we have been able to develop afterwards we have done so in spite of "the saving grace" of the Jesus of Nazareth in spite of "the truth" he impregnated his disciples with ! If he be "the type," why is it said that if to-day he appeared in a London street with all his crudities and eccentricities, he would be hooted and pelted with rotten eggs ? How can he be claimed to be the Crown and Essence of Humanity when "the vast and hoary religious systems of Father East lay outside His range of vision ; *their* great Saints were wholly unknown to Him ? His world, on the evidence before us", continues the Rev R. Roberts, "was that of Palestine, its problems those of Galilee and Jerusalem, and its literature that of his own nation" (vide *supra* chs. II & III). It is not clear what insignificant quota of "His secret," Plato and Aristotle were able to anticipate ? It is also not known what "glimpse of His truth," say, about the relation between God and man, and God and the world, was vouchsafed unto Yájnavalka and Vádaráyana. Will Principal Jones give any clue enabling us to understand how Lao-tze and Confucius caught "something of His spirit," or Pharaoh Akhnaton saw the vision of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man and, from the throne, preached 'non-resistance' and practised it to the letter ? Unfortunately for the Rev. Mr. Jones and men of his mistaken zeal, ancient history informs us that the Gautama Buddha had preached and practised a type of *Visvamartri* which in loftiness, both theoretical and practical, still remains unsurpassed, and his apostles under the elevating influence of the great Emperor Asoke had inspired the world, including some at least of the gospellers themselves, with a *nobler* spiritual fervour before the message of the so-called "Saviour of the world" was ever dreamt of ! When the whole Gentile world, both East and West, stood on so high a level of spirituality, was it not, to say the least of it, almost criminal to speak of it contemptuously [as is given in the mouth of Jesus, viz., "after all these (i.e. worldly) things do the Gentiles seek" (*Matt.* 6^{32}), or "Do not even the Gentiles the same" (5^{47}), or "In praying use not vain repetitions as the Gentiles do" (6^{7})] as if the speaker and his followers belonged to a higher race of beings ? It cannot be historically substantiated that the Jews were spiritually higher than

the Hindus when the Christian era began. So we need not be detained by "the loftiness of His teaching," of the originality of which the comparative study of religions inaugurated by Rájá Rámmohun Roy has already made havoc. One should be pardoned if one feels curious as to what "scattered hint here and there of His Secret" awakened Newton to his Cosmology and Darwin to his theory of Creation against which "the crown and essence of humanity" and his myrmidons have fought tooth and nail for about a century, though now they are just on the point of an abject surrender.* But hush! Unconsciously I have glided away hundreds of years from the age of the New Testament which I am not authorised by it to do. Did not "His truth" predict the end of the world before "this generation" passed away? The irreverent world has withstood the onslaught of this Messianic prediction, "the very God of the Very God's" prediction, the prediction of one "in whom all the fulness of Godhead dwelt bodily." We have not gone to him, trusted him, yet we also have been saved from the catastrophe! The prophets of dissolution, in spite of "the saving grace," have all passed away, still we stand on the *terra firma*. As in the case of the end, so in the case of the beginning of the world, humanity, instead of going to "the Desire of all nations", has discarded him all but in name. Did man begin his career in perfection and did woman spring from his rib? Did

* "The effect on theology of the doctrine of the evolution of man from lower animal forms was discussed at the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Oxford. Professor E. W. Macbride, professor of Zoology at the Imperial College of Science, South Kensington, pointed out in the course of a paper on evolution the vital phenomenon that a hundred years ago an ordinary sensible man held that the whole human race sprang from one pair, and that, as the result of their sin, nations were unable to please God and that death and destruction awaited the heathen. If evolution were true, he said, not one of these views was tenable. They could never have direct evidence of evolution unless an angelic recorder had taken notes, and the notes were available. Nevertheless the denial of evolution to-day meant intellectual suicide. No doctrine, he added, had such a profound influence on theology as evolution. Indeed it seemed to him, as an amateur who had always had the deepest interest in theological problems, to necessitate an entire recasting of the foundations. Canon Barnes, Bishop-designate of Birmingham, opening the subsequent discussion, said the Church of England was coming rapidly to accept evolution, but there was a violent objection to it in certain parts of America and in the Roman Catholic Church." *The Statesman*, September 24, 1925. The case of John T. Scopes is in point, vide *supra* p. 82. Canon H. A. Pritchard, acting dean of a New York Cathedral, asserts that nobody believes the Biblical story of the creation. (Ibid, December 6, 1925).

suffering and death enter the world because of the disobedience of the first pair? Mankind as a whole, has in the teeth of opposition from the side of "the Saviour of the world," outgrown these fables and yet these fables have largely shaped the subject-matter of the New Testament which, we are told, holds the destiny of the human race in the hollow of its palm. However, if the light of science and the historic progress of mankind pretty thoroughly belie the contents of the gospels and their claims, the mode of their presentment and the implication thereof do so more conclusively, betraying their ultra-biographical origin. It is now time to proceed on that line.

The problem of the authority of the Bible does not exist for the orthodox. For them the New Testament is God's Word miraculously communicated to mankind. But the modern man with his developed rational faculty is not willing to be included in this particular genus *homo*. He opposes the artillery of his critical power to this view of the Word of God. First, he criticises the text of the document in order to ascertain the correct reading thereof, *i.e.*, what the author put in black and white. This is lower, rather inferior, criticism. He does not accept the reading thrust upon him by tradition, as recent researches have discovered numerous new manuscripts not consulted before, and as new translators, and their name is legion, have pointed out conflicting readings in them and shocking mistranslations by original translators, not to speak of the apparent interpolations unnoticed by them, blinded as they were by their traditional belief. The result of this criticism has been thus pithily stated by Rudolph Otto: "Having excluded the Fourth Gospel as a source of history, criticism proceeds to seperate the reliable from the less reliable within the Synoptics" (*Life and Ministry of Jesus*, p. 10). But unfortunately for the historicist what seems to be reliable to one is found wholly unreliable to others and forthwith rejected, there being no historical basis in any of them. Dr. Bernard M. Allen in a recent treatise on *The Story Behind the Gospels* omits the Fourth Gospel altogether as unreliable for biographical purposes and prunes the rest almost to the vanishing point (p. 29) as "unworthy of acceptance by historical criticism". Thus historical criticism develops. The tradition of the Church that the four Gospels were written by the contemporaries of Jesus is disbelieved, principally, among other reasons, because of their conflict among themselves even about main incidents of Jesus' life generally believed to be historical. "On any candid interpretation," observes Benjamin W. Bacon D. D., "it must

Historical criticism.

be admitted that the Fourth Gospel repudiates the Lukan date of nativity and reverts to the older tradition" so that Jesus would be forty when he began to teach (*The Fourth Gospel*, p. 408). The fourth Evangelist's topography too "differs in a very striking way from the synoptic" (p. 385). Dr. Bacon does not admit John's authorship of the fourth gospel. So the origin of each of the books and their combination in the present form must be determined *de novo*. Higher criticism, on the other hand, proceeds and asks what the value of the facts we find therein is. The result is far-reaching. The belief in the inspired character and historical accuracy of the books of the New Testament having been most convincingly laid aside, theologians of all shades of orthodoxy and heterodoxy—orthodox Pádrés like Farrar and Inge, Unitarians like Sinclair and Carpenter, liberal Christians like Loisy and Schmiedel, sceptic Mill and atheist Renton - all had to shift for something to go upon in the place of the ruined tradition. This they have found, in what they are pleased to call the historical Jesus, in the place of the traditional one. On the other side Dr. Gore too fails in his attempt at the rehabilitation of the orthodox view that Jesus was God, else from the Gospel records he must be denied the credit even of a good man as he deliberately encouraged men to look upon him in a way which is legitimate towards God only. The old saying is : "*Aut deus aut homo non bonus*"—either God or not a good man. And Jesus did "exhibit that exclusive claim which suggests nothing else but the 'jealousy' of God. And is it not the supreme sin of pride or arrogance for any man, even a commissioned prophet, to allow himself to assume this exclusive position ? (*The Reconstruction of Belief*, p. 319). This is *petitio principii* pure and simple. What is the harm to take Jesus to be a bad man or a pretender if the so-called foundation documents prove him so ? But it will be shown in a subsequent discussion (Chap. XIX) that Jesus is God evemerised and symbolically represented as man. He is not God incarnated as man. However, they are all guilty of a *vicious circle* from the outset. They have manufactured a "living picture of Jesus the Teacher" out of their brain overstocked with the traditional view and then read it into the gospels. Miracles from birth to ascension except, of course, the healing of the sick by auto-suggestion (!), must go! Goes not with it everything that is particularly Jesuine? But they say, the story of his life and heroism in death still remains. The so-called biographers of Jesus have failed to furnish a reasonable canon by which to distinguish the historical portion from the unhistorical

Vicious circle throughout.

No method in the biographer.

and the mythical. The supernatural run parallel with the human. What authority have we to reject the one and accept the other? From time immemorial people have written cart-loads about supernatural beings and these beings are as life-like as any Jesuses our theologians please to create. "It is quite certain and will be questioned by no one", observes Dr. Drews, "that the gospels contain a large amount of legendary matter, and that a good deal in them is to be understood mystically or symbolically. It is not at all equally well established that they have an historical basis" (*Witnesses*, p. 167). This is the truth about the gospels that is forced home into the careful critical reader's mind. So Lublinski in *Das Dogma* has most fittingly summarised the result of his study in the following terms: "The character now humanly approaching us and now fading into the mystical distance would not be found in a definite personality if his psychology and conduct were considered from the biographical point of view. As a symbol and godman, however, he could not have been better described" (Ibid, p. 161). Now, if book-making culminated in the gospel of John the author did not care to hide the fact that he had given blood and flesh to the Gnostic *Logos* and the early Fathers did not hesitate to accept it so. From evidences both external and internal Pfleiderer has shown in his Pr. Ch. vol. iv, Chap. vii that the gospel was neither written by Apostle John nor before the middle of the 2nd century. As to the authorship of St. John even such an advocate of crude orthodoxy as von Soden remarks: "While there is much that speaks against it, there is nothing that speaks clearly in its favour" (*History of Early Christian Literature*, p. 435, Crown Theological Library Series). Really, John's Gospel has been declared an allegory historicised. And there is no harm that such an allegorical narrative should be full of "the freedom and variety of life" as the Rev. F. Sinclair thinks the non-miraculous side of the gospel account is. Against this logic of historicity I cite Maharshi Válmiki as my witness, and a host of other master word-painters. Moreover, the description of the rejected miracles is as vivid and graphic as the other parts, while, on the other hand, any ordinary fiction will outshine the gospels in this respect. A scholar of Whittaker's calibre has spoken of Jeremiah as "a figure with life and colour, but an impossible personage" (*Origins*, p. xxxiv). Here one is reminded of Huxley's remark on Dean Stanley that the latter accepted the Pentateuch because he had visited Palestine, but could not believe Genesis as he had not been present at the Creation.

John historicises allegory.

Argument from life-like personality begs the question.

This is only too true in the case of many whose historical opinion is materially influenced by such extraneous circumstances and determined on such personal grounds. Because the life of Jesus appeals to the imagination—and this is substantially the ill-informed educated Indian standpoint—therefore Jesus must be a historical person! Once the present writer's view as to the mythical character of a particular Bengali drama was forthwith challenged on the ground that the dialogue therein between Lakshmi and Náráyana was so life-like and consequently the whole thing could not but be historically true. There is no stronger argument for the history of Jesus also. Theologians are really out on an impossible errand,—to extract a *man* from documents that speak of a supernatural and metaphysical being, interspersed with interpolated human characteristics, if any. But the question of interpolation is too early yet. The Ebionitic and Docetic, Judaic and anti-Judaic, Sabbatarian and anti-Sabbatari an, Davidic and anti-Davidic, pro-Samaritan and anti-Samaritan and a multitude of other conflicting interests, contradicting one another, contributed to the formation of the Gospel-hero. "No one can say," maintains Dr. Smith, "whether a mystical dreamer or a strenuous reformer [contention between Wrede and Schweitzer], whether a far-seeing theorist or a stout-hearted man of action, was the more probable" (*Ecce Deus*, p. xii). Theologians could not extricate themselves from these difficulties as they have been entangled in their self-created net of a search after historicity. "Critical theologians have hitherto affirmed the historicity of the gospel narratives, but they", Dr. Drews holds, "have landed in insuperable difficulties and insoluble contradictions ; so poor, not to say purely negative, a result amounts to a *bankruptcy of their whole method*" (*Witnesses*, pp. 166-167). Mr. Joseph McCabe asks : "Have they any consistent and firm vision of the character and career of Christ to offer us?" In answer he, the author of *The Sources of the Morality of the Gospels*, says: "Not in the least. They are hopelessly divided as to what is historical or not historical; plausible or implausible; and they have no constructive principles to encourage us" (p. 16). And McCabe also has had his original sin and therefore staunchly fights against myth-theory. But he is inexorably unbiassed and truthful. Truthfulness is made of such stuff.

2

Such an orthodox writer as the Rev. Sir John C. Hawkins, Bart, D.D., Honorary Canon of St. Albans, begins his book of textual

criticism, *Horae Synopticae*, by saying: "That two at least of the Synoptic Gospels are compilations is evident upon the face of them". Yes, the self-possessed reader, if not duped, will not fail to be struck by the fact that the gospels grew in an atmosphere of conscious myth-making. Toland, in his *Life of Milton* (as quoted by Strauss) after discussing how the Bishop of Exeter's forged book foisted on King Charles I was received with implicit faith by the public, and brought about a great change in civil and religious affairs and earned for that monarch the title of Martyr and that in a time of learning and enlightenment, when both the parties were jealous of each other's doings, emphatically says: "I cease to wonder any longer how so many supposititious pieces under the name of Christ, his apostles, and other great persons should be published and approved in those primitive times, when it was of so much importance to have them believed. When the cheats were too many on all sides for them to reproach one another, while at the same time commerce was not near so general as it is now, and the whole earth was overspread with the darkness of superstition." Every sectarian writer, every myth-maker was out to introduce himself and added contradiction to contradiction. An actual life can not contradict itself in such multitudinous ways in so short a time. The synoptics give Jesus so short as only one year's career. "The most various traits of character may be ascribed with equal right to Jesus, compatible and incompatible—yea, even though directly contradictory" (*Ecce Deus*, p. xii). The many irreconcilable contradictions that we find in the sayings of Jesus rather suggest, as Drews points out, that several persons, not only one, are behind them. The biographical school has no explanation to offer to this. Nor is it possible to single out the interpolator in an elaborate myth like this. If one party is allowed to invent, why not the other. And who knows which party originally set the ball of invention rolling? That inventions are there is admitted on all hands. It will not do to say and it is erroneous to contend that the question of the legendary character of the gospels was not raised at the beginning and that it is only a latter-day manufacture. Even the authors of the gospels themselves were not sure of their foot-hold. "It is thus clear from Luke's two books that some considerable mystery attached to the origin and spread of Christianity even in his own day" (Rev. W. Wooding in *Hibbert Journal* 1911, p. 864). The early books against the historical origin of Christianity were purposely destroyed. "The prevailing party", Toland affirms, "did actually order all those books which offended them to be burnt or otherwise suppressed."

Gospels invented.

(See also Lechler's *History of English Deism*). Who knows that the fanatical monks of the 3rd century did not attempt the destruction of or actually destroy the major part of the Alexandrian Library for this purpose? Really, the charge of myth-making is as early as the 2nd century. We find in Origen's *Contra Celsum* Celsus, the anti-Christian, say: "You feed us with fables and can not give them a shade of plausibility, although some of you like drunken men who lay hands on themselves have modified the texts of the gospels three or four or more times in order to escape the criticisms we direct against you." Origen's Trypho too reiterates the charge: "Ye follow an empty rumour and make a Christ for yourselves." And Dr. Drews observes: "It is very remarkable that Clement, instead of appealing to the behaviour of Jesus to show his humility, relies on the prophet Isaiah" (*Witnesses*, p. 72 f. n.). The supernatural is the very foundation of the New Testament. The Teacher in the gospels having already been shown a mere compilation, if now the miraculous element is also eliminated, what remains is not an "effulgent personality" but a mere shadow—at least, never "a creature not too bright or too good for human nature's daily food" as Rev. Sinclair would have it.

Charge of myth-making ancient.

Whence have we got this "effulgent personality," pray? We have got four gospels, sometimes miscalled the biographies of Jesus, to go upon. But what is their evidential value? "As to the Synoptic Gospels such evidence ["contemporary or early contemporary historical testimonies"] is," observes Dr. Hawkins in the preface of the work already cited, "very slight." Two of the gospels are attributed to two apostles and two to the associates of two other apostles and that with an evident purpose. John's gospel has been discarded as mythical, both as to the authorship and subject-matter, beyond any reasonable hope of restoration. It is reported by Papias: "Matthew wrote the words of the Lord in Hebrew"; and the hungry theologians fell upon it without stopping to think who this Matthew was and whose words he compiled. The apostle was Levi, son of Alphæus (*Mark* 2[14]), but he was not identified with Matthew until a later period (*Witnesses*, p. 127). On the other hand, in those days, before Jesus came to prominence, the term "Lord" was the monopoly of the Persian Saviour, the God Mithra. Why may it not be that some Matthew compiled Mithra sayings? As a matter of fact they were not the sayings of one definite individual, but a collection from many religious teachers who were accustomed

Gospels foisted on imaginary authors.

to preface their pronouncements with the formula: "Thus saith the Lord"; and this prefatory remark is very frequently met with in the Old Testament. What is the harm that these were sayings from the Old Testament. This is the only probable conclusion as they were written in Hebrew. These "words of the Lord" were current in the second century in different versions. This shows on what a weak reed the theologians lean for their historical support. In no other field such a method is adopted. But when historicity is to be proved for Jesus, historical research has no father or mother, as the Bengali proverb has it. As mere "sayings"* are not biography, so, forthwith, a conclusion is arrived at that there must have been some anecdotes also with the sayings. Necessity is the mother of invention and this is an apt illustration of it. Luke has been connected with Paul as Mark with Peter. It cannot but be so. The two rival factions must be equally represented. But Luke too has been given up as a romancer like Matthew. They say, both of them embellished upon a Mark. Again, a quite opposite view is also held. Mark, finding Matthew and Luke impossible biographers, threw them overboard and filled his account with miracles and vaticinations, now declared by Dr. Major as "derived from current Jewish and primitive Christian apocalyptic speculation" ("Reminiscences of Jesus by an Eye-witness, Modern Churchman's Library" as quoted by Robertson in *The Literary Guide*, June, 1925). In order to make Luke appear as some-body he has been made a companion of Paul in the latter's travels. All these are makeshifts to give to the life of Jesus the ghost of a chance of historicity which the accounts do not possess on their own merits. It is generally believed that Luke was also the compiler of the *Acts*, but Dr. Hawkins points out differences which lead to many alternative conclusions. Either, Luke *interpolated upon* some older 'travel document' or he himself has been profusely meddled with. Either, he made extracts from some older document

Words of the Lord.

Hand of rival factions.

How fiction proceeds.

* But the "sayings" do not include the bed-rock of Christianity, the much-vaunted Sermon on the Mount. Did Jesus preach the Sermon at all? If so, how is it that Peter did not know of it? Mark's omission also is damaging in diverse ways. It involves the authenticity of Peter's Petership and Christ's Christship. Was Peter reporting about some other "Lord" or was Mark connected with some other Peter? This is what the Bengali adage—having a snake while digging for an earth-worm, means. However that may be, Mark has got no evangel.

and carelessly left the "We" standing in them or designedly did so, as preferred by Zeller, in order to pass for one of Paul's companions (Vide the work cited, pp. 177-183). So the last hope of historicity lies with *Mark*. And the theologians are not without their witness. They have discovered that Mark was a disciple of Peter whom the Evangelist followed to Rome where he was persuaded to write down Peter's reminiscences dictated "by a revelation of the Holy Spirit" (*Witnesses*, p. 125). Here is a swarm of difficulties. In the opinion of such a church authority as Loisy the gospel of *Mark* was never written by a disciple of Peter and, according to Schmiedel, Peter had never been to Rome. If Peter was the apostle of that name, why were the services of the Holy Ghost requisitioned to dictate notes about Jesus? It belies forgery. And what reminiscences do we get? At best, some vaticinations by neurotics and demoniacs. If this is history, history must be in a very bad way. And how has the connection between *Mark*—to be exact, "the Primitive Mark," not the present gospel—and Peter been established? Why, the historian Eusebius wrote in the 4th century that Papias, the bishop of Hieropolis in the middle of the 2nd century whose writings have been lost, had learnt from one John who, in his turn, had been informed by Mark that the latter had been Peter's interpreter and "he carefully wrote down all that he *remembered*" (Papias as quoted in *Witnesses*, p. 124. The *italics* are ours). For history we are to depend on the remembrance of what was originally given *not* in its "proper order"! Because the same authority informs us that "Peter instructed his hearers as opportunity offered, though he did not give the words of the Lord in their proper order." Events were dictated not in the order they had happened, though the eyewitness took the help of the Holy Ghost to describe them. Notes were written by a hearer as he remembered them. But the author does not say he had any connection with Peter. Usebius reports that Papias, whom the historian calls "narrow-minded" and most of whose writings he rejects as fabulous, wrote about this connection from exactly the third hearsay. And there is not a word about who these John and Peter were. These mere names will not make them the reputed apostles. At least in the broad day-light of the 20th century history will not be made in this way. Yet, this legend of the eye-witness' reminiscences could be accepted for what it is worth, if it were not already an established fact that the early Christian writers were out in a body to fabricate historicity. However, if Mark be taken as biographical, the other gospels, by implication, must be given the go-by.

Legend of Peter at Rome.

Mark an allegory.

In reality, *Mark* was originally a symbolical book, profusely interpolated upon to reach ultimately a human figure. It is mostly favoured by the Unitarians, because it is devoid of both the miraculous birth and the resurrection. The latter has been introduced by interpolation. *Mark's* actual ending is with the burial. Verse 15[47] is the interpolatory foil for introducing resurrection, as in the Rámáyana Sitá's *ordeal* is the prelude to the interpolated *exile*, the great Epic most fittingly ending, as it should do, with SriRámá's coronation. The whole of chapter 16 of *Mark* is ostensibly an interpolation, a most Christian interpolation for the matter of that. A very large slice of chapter 15. (vs. 13 to 38) also has been rejected. Says Mr. A. T. Robertson. "No one maintains that this rather florid passage belongs to Mark" (*Studies in Mark's Gospel, p. 133).* It is agreed upon on all hands that the gospel ends with 5[10]—"For they were afraid." To many this seems to be an unliterary, un-Greek, *un-Christian* ending. In order to end all such quibbles, common sense suggests that the gospel ends with the burial i. e. v. 15[46]. It may be less Christian, but it is more natural and more scientific. However, the most stupendous obstacle in the way of making *Mark* the Unitarian gospel is its miracles. "Reject the miracles," comes the prompt suggestion. But to that Mr. A. T. Robertson's rejoinder is most damaging. Without miracles "we should have mere scraps of narrative with disjointed sayings, and a purely human Jesus who was one of the most mistaken of men" (Ibid p. 55). Yet it behoves us to see what effulgent personality, "human nature's daily food," we get from this last citadel of historicity, an irreparably damaged citadel though.

A mere tissue of miracles.

Take the opening chapter of *Mark*—Jesus is ushered in there as the promised Messiah, John prophesying of him as the Coming One whom God hails from heaven as his beloved Son *(supra* p. 189) and for whom the heavens rend asunder and the Spirit descends as a dove. *

"Dove"-conception allegorical.

* Mr. Robertson holds : 'The conception of the Holy Spirit as a dove came from them [Samaritans] to the Christians" (S. H. C. p. 29). In the Rigveda, incorporated also in the *Mundakopanishad*, the Indwelling Spirit is called a bird. The Biblical Jona whose name means "dove" seems to have been originally a sun-god and related to the sun-gods Perseus and Joshua. The dove was, according to Assyrian ideas, the wife of Ninus (that is to say, the fish) who appears in the Old Testament under the name of Nun, as the father of Joshua, the original of the name of Jesus. As is known, the mother of Jesus also is a dove (*peleias*, Pleiad) in the

Jesus fasts for forty days in the wilderness, living with wild beasts and tempted of Satan but ministered unto by angels (How excellent food for human nature's daily consumption !) Wherever he goes people obey him at his first call and he preaches astonishing sermons of which not a single word is preserved. Demons recognise him as the Holy One of God, and he expels a devil. A fever is cured, a multitude is healed, many devils are cast out ; he goes on preaching (nobody knows what ?) and casting out devils (devils always know him !) and at last cures a leper instantaneously but the grateful patient disobeys him against his entreaty. Jesus charged him "to say nothing to any man, but he went out and began to publish it much." How life-like ! He is obeyed almost unasked, but when he solicits them to obey, straightway they disobey. Biography indeed ! And altogether most excellent "for human nature's daily food" ! This we are invited to believe to be the life-story of a real man who moved and spoke and felt like a man. But miracles apart, what do we get ? Let us find out a reply on the line Mr. Robertson accepting the challenge of Mr. Sinclair has laid down in *The Historical Jesus.* But alas ! at the very outset (*Mark* 1^{1-9}) our progress is arrested by an enigmatic figure who, "clothed with camel's hair", is only the duplicate of Elijah (2 *Kings* 1^{8}) and preaching : "there cometh after me he that is mighter than I",* is the transmigration of Elias (*Mal.* 3^{5} ; *Is.* 40^{3}). John the Baptist stands here as the fulfilment of a prophecy i. e., a

John the Baptist.

early Christian conception (Drews), but more of it later on. What Dr. Israel Abrahams writes on the subject will repay perusal. In his opinion, and his opinion about the Old Testament can not be trifled with, "in several passages the Heavenly Voice (Heb. *Bath-Qol* the Daughter of the Voice) is represented as piping or chirping like a bird." And not the bird in general ; he quotes a passage from the Babylonian Talmud where "dove" in especial is referred to : "I heard a *Bath-Qol moaning as a dove.*" Then he comments on this : "It is this association of the bird and the heavenly voice that may, under the Gospel narrative of the Baptism, at once illustrate and authenticate the symbolism of the synoptists." Here Dr. W. B. Smith gets a strong support from an unexpected quarter. (vide *infra* Chap. xix). Dr. Abrahams suggests nother line of metaphor afrom which the entering of the dove into Jesus may be symbolically. interpreted. "In the Rabbinic literature the dove is", notices the eminent Hebrew sholar, "for the most part an emblem of Israel, its gentleness, fidelity, its persecution, its submission.' (*Pharisaism and the Gospels*, First Series, pp.47-48). So the metaphor has been misunderstood. And this is not the only example *of the abuse of a metaphor.* In *Válmiki's Rámáyana*, as Sita Devi is likened to Lakshmi (श्रियेव) in several places, so she is now identified with the latter.

* Some say, here is a decided astral significance, the Baptist coalescing with the Babylonian Joannes who rose from the waves of the Red Sea to teach man as to his

miracle. So we must give him up, and the whole story of John and of the baptism as belonging to the province of fiction, built as it is on the prophet Isaiah. If a real man moved among men, we want to know something of his antecedents, of what he did; but we get only a transcription from the old Testament. The conventional dress and food of an Essene are there, of course. Nothing more. The Baptist has been introduced to us to play the part assigned by Jewish prophecy to Elias as the precursor of the Messiah. Exactly in the same way a nursery tale begins without the least semblance of historical origin. "All the gospels connect Jesus with the Baptist but," says Rev. Mr. Wooding "none of them seem to know who this Jesus was." Matthew and Luke invent, but differently, only to contradict each other (*Hibbert Journal*, 1911, p. 863). The genealogy was actually copied from *Nehemiah* 12. However, the next four verses are miraculous and therefore to be discarded, but not without due observations on the temptation-myth. We might cite the victory of Buddha over *Mára* (the later Jewish Satan is "the spirit of concupiscence, also the God of this world"—so the gospel myth has it) as its spiritual original, as Dr. Thorborn in his *Jesus the Christ* suggests "that the Christian narrative largely presents, in picturesque and symbolic form the subjective experiences and doubts of Jesus." Dr. Carpenter takes it to be the symbol of "the eternal hope, as the triumph of humanity over evil" (F. Th. Gospels, p. 143). Mr. Robertson too indicates that the myth is drawn "possibly more directly from the East where the idea of a Temptation goes back to the Vedas."* But

Temptation-myth universal.

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spiritual nature. This is the southern constellation of the *Fishes* (Fishes playing a conspicuous part in the kingdom of God in different connections—See *infra*) that seemed to the inhabitants of Babylon to rise out of the Red Sea—rising when the sun set and setting when the sun rises That is, the year was divided into two equinoxes or solstices—John and Jesus—winter aad summer. John's festival is still being celebrated on a solstice day. This is expressed by saying that John was bern six months before Jesus (*Luke* 1[36]) and had already disappeared from the scene when Jesus took the field. (*Mk*, 1[14]). *John* 3[30] says: "He must increase but I must decrease". The summer sun is surely mightier than the winter sun. The myth of Joannes or Oannes, the Man-fish myth is also interpreted as the legend of the arts of civilisation coming up the Persian Gulf from India to Mesapotamia and the recent (1924) Punjab archeological discoveries give some ground for the credence of this interpretation.

Baptist astronomical.

* Does he mean the Yama-Nachiketá episode in the Katha-Upanishad and similar other themes in the *Brihadáranyaka* 6-1 and the *Chhándogya* 5-3? Then Robertson is right. The Buddha's conquest over *Mára* has naturally been referred to in this connection in the body of the book. Zoroaster was assailed at the age of thirty, the veritable mythological age.

the graphical inspiration of this symbolical picture has probably been derived from Greek iconography, painting or sculpture, because the Biblical story of Satan (a goat-legged being) and Jesus on the mountain-top absolutely coincides with the Greco-Roman account of Babylonian astronomy where the Goat-God stands by the side of the Sun-God "on the mountain of the world," (i.e., "the height of the heavens) at the beginning of the sun's yearly course, in the sign Capricorn.' A whole series of Greek myths—Pan and Zeus; Marsyas and Apollo; Silenus and Dionysos - have been drawn from it, of which that of Pan and the young Jupiter is the most picturesque and suggestive.

We are now freed from the *Temptation* to take up again the thread of the narrative which actually begins with verse 14. But what do we find here ? The world is invited to believe in a Gospel of God of which not a single word is communicated to us. Yet Jesus busies himself in collecting disciples, for what purposes nobody knows ! (S. p. 187). And men of those days were so obedient ! He said, "come" and they, sacrificing their uttermost all, "followed him" of whose antecedents they knew nothing. This is not a new-gospel-preaching surely; it is fit only for a dumb show ! And, in this otherwise empty narrative, such stock but conventional phrases as "come and I will make you fishers of men" "casting a net," "mending the net", "left their father in the boat with the hired servants", seem to be extravagant details and give the whole affair the appearance of a fairy tale. Here Strauss has drawn our attention to the calling of Elisha from the plough by Elijah. However, the narrator in the Gospel gives us things of which he seems to have had no direct knowledge. Mr. Sinclair has urged his reader to dismiss all prepossessions while discussing the subject and not even to allow any critic or commentator to intervene. Therefore, it behoves us at this stage to seek the help of one who is a master in both New and Old Testament criticism and yet believes in the historicity of Jesus. Says Wellhausen in his *Einleitung*—I cull the following from *The Historical Jesus* :—

Absurd stories.

> The Gospel of Mark in its entirety lacks the character of history. Among the *dramatis personæ* it is only Jesus who distinctly speaks and acts. But of what he lived by, how he dwelt, ate, and drank, bore himself with his companions, nothing is vouchsafed. It is told that he taught in the synagogue, on the Sabbath but no notion is given of the how. Why is not something more and something more trust-worthy, reported of the intercourse of the Master with his disciples ? It would rather

***Mark* no history.**

seem that the narrative tradition in Mark did not come directly from the intimates of Jesus. Mark has not the aim of making his person distinguishable, or even intelligible. It is lost for him in the divine vocation; he means to show that Jesus is the Christ."

B. Weiss, a biographist though, speaks in the same vein :—

> We cannot trace the inner movement, or even the course of external events, from the successive pieces in Mark. The form and tone which Mark gives to various parts of his narrative are often more dogmatic than historical; he himself is not a chronicler, but a witness to the gospel of Christ, the son of God. (*Witnesses* p. 156).

So, the man who moves among men and the Jew who speaks to other Jews and to whom Mr. Sinclair would introduce us, is not found in the Gospel. He is *Logos* pure and simple, cleverly given blood and flesh.

So, Dr. Drews gives us only the bare truth when he reiterates :

> The earlier Christian literature is acquainted with a Jesus-God, a godman, a heavenly high priest and saviour Jesus, a mataphysical spirit, descending from heaven to earth, assuming human form, dying and rising again (cp. p. 131).

But historicisation of an idea.

This is what may be called the historicisation of the neo-Platonic or Gnostic Logos. Pierson has analysed the process. The materials for a suffering Messiah together with the ideas of the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension are supplied by Isaiah. First come the ideas and then those ideas are embodied in deeds. By slow degrees the artists appear and paint the picture of Christ. This is how the synoptic gospels came into existence. But the Fourth gospel reduced the whole drama to its original form (vide the *Radical views*).

3

No historical ground for gospel narrative.

The biographical school is in a sore straight, so much so that it can not get even one item of the Biblical narrative historically proved on the strictest scientific ground. "A jury of twelve scholars would," remarks Mr. G. B. Foster, "scarcely agree on oath with reference to any historical fact on the life of Christ' (*Christianity in its Modern Expression* as quoted in the *Hibbert Journal*, Oct. 1921) with which J. Weiss's memorable utterance of despair that "not a single word of Jesus has been preserved, and that everything has been put into his mouth." (*Christus*) fits in perfectly; and J. Weiss is a theologian. Yet, nobody can ascertain on what principle we are invited to "read the

words of Jesus, *as if they came from Jesus*," and assured that "thou wilt recognise that this is not merely the simplest, but the safest theory" (as quoted in *Witnesses*, p. 290). Yes, it is always the "safest" way and the simplest too, *to argue in a circle*, and come to a preconceived conclusion. The traditional views of Jesus has been generated by the Bible. Now, justify that view by the study of the Bible of which not a single word is authentic ! Alas ! for logic when a vested interest is to be upheld. But Von Weiss has got his justification as he takes the present circumstances to be "the fateful hours through which our [theological] science is passing." Unfortunately, there is nothing else to urge in condonation of this woeful state than a bad logic. They say desperate situations call for strange remedies. We have already shown (S. p 243) that Dr. Carpenter has equally successfully woven an equally glaring vicious circle in exactly the same circumstances. The tragedy is easily explained. The situation is this : These Christian authors received in their childhood an impression about Christ from the Bible, uncritically read and memorised on trust, and also from their environments. After a critical study they destroy the Bible which generated this impression, but are quite incapable of getting rid of the impression. This farcical justification of it is only an after-thought, an attempt at a reasoned presentation of a foregone conclusion. It will not do to say that in those days people did not know the art of writing a biography. Plutarch was there as a model for any Greek writer. This eminent author has dealt with mythological personages also, such as Herakles and Romulus, as the gospellers have done with Jesus. But, with real biographical matters to go upon, he has shown his hand in a way quite different from that of the gospels. Take the life of Perecles, where, after the brief notice of parentage * in which the

But life of Perecles a biography.

* Jesus' ancestry is wanting in *Mark*, though it is the most important thing to begin a biography with. Mary is mentioned in an interpolating passage, the motive of which we have already indicated (S. p. 232). In the other gospels Joseph is mentioned and that only to trace the connection with David. We have two contradictory genealogies in *Matthew* and *Luke*, but even orthodox scholars, such as the Rev. Mr. Wright, have rejected them as very late interpolations (S. p. 256) for diverse purposes. Strauss also very early drew our attention to their imaginary character. Says he : "It is very improbable that the genealogy of an obscure family like that of Joseph, extending through so long a series of generations, should have been preserved during all the confusion of the exile and the disturbed period that followed." This absurd character of the genealogy strikes every sensible man. And not the ancestry only, the whole birth-story is absurd with all its paraphernalia.

Fictitious genealogy of Jesus.

touch of the miraculous is not wanting—because, if somebody is anybody, the supernatural must be there in connection with his birth (Cp. the *Paramahansa's* birth even in our time). We in Robertson's read *Historical Jesus* :

> "His body was symmetrical, but his head was long out of all proportions ; for which reason in nearly all his statues he is represented wearing a helment ; as the sculptors did not wish, I suppose, to reproach him with this blemish...Most writers tell us that his tutor in music was Damon, whose name they say should be pronounced with the first syllable short. Aristotle, however, says that he studied under Pythocleides. This Damon, it seems, was a sophist of the highest order.

Nothing touching the fringe of it could be gathered from the so-called biographies of Jesus, viz., the gospels, though they were chosen from out of hundreds of such scripts. One may question the accuracy of Plutarch's biographical sketches, but they are at least what biographies are like.

Now to follow the narrator in the Gospel. "And straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught." This useless detail serves no purpose, as not a word of what he taught is given. But, instead, we are given a man with an unclean spirit and plunged forthwith into the miraculous, the theme in which the gospellers are in their own element. Mr. Joseph McCabe who, after denuding Jesus' teachings of the last vestige of originality, clings to the historicity as if to some original sin, has not failed to bring out pointedly this feature of the gospel narrative. "If the inquirer will try the simple and interesting experiment", Mr. McCabe fatally anticipates Mr. Sinclair, "of eliminating from the Gospel of *Mark* all the episodes which essentially involves miracle, he will find the remainder of the narrative amazingly paltry". (*Sources of Morality*, p. 17). So, overlooking these episodes, we come to another useless detail : "A great while before day he rose up". Why ? To go to a desert where his disciples searched him out to inform him "All are seeking thee." Jesus forthwith leaves the place to go to the next town to preach ; but to preach what the reporter does not know. But he casts out devils all the same. This would be an excellent "hide and seek" game for children. We are repeatedly told that there was teaching, but of this not a syllable is reported. The narrator does not know what he is doing ; he is filling in an empty frame with empty words. Because, after skipping over heaps of miracles and Messianic claims

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Says Dr. Carpenter : The accounts of the Nativity are not only mutually inconsistent, but they can not be fitted into the rest of the narrative. (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 56. See also p. 103).

which we are asked to ignore, we come to the first touch of actuality in the following : "Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill ?" This too is in connection with a miracle which we are to strike out ! But we are not going to do that. Here a most important question is raised. If this anti-Sabbatarian Messiah, the Son of man claiming to be the Lord of the Sabbath, be also the historical Jesus, then the Teacher of the Sermon on the Mount, insisting on the maintenance of the Law, (*Matt.* 5^{17-18}) must go. The Messiah and the Teacher do not pull on well in the gospels. Surely, it has turned out a wild-goose-chase to discover Mr. Sinclair's "real man" in the Gospel. "It is a heap of unreal incident, fortuitously collocated, and showing nothing approaching to symmetrical design" as Mr. Robertson suggests. (H. J. p. 33). The Rev. A. Wright pronounces it "completely unchronological" (*New Testament Problem*, p. 15). B. Weiss also in his *Evangelium* bears witness to this : "It is clear from the section that deals with the two miraculous meals that he has no idea of the localities. To represent Jesus moving about the sea suddenly appearing in the region of Tyre and Sidon, and then to the east of the sea again, shows that the writer has no idea of the topography of the country". He does not take the least interest in such things, as Drews points out. (*Witnesses*, p. 157). Why should he ? Is not Logos beyond time and space ? Moreover, in an astral myth one can afford to be a little careless about years and miles.

Chronological and topographical inconsistencies.

Other gospellers also are as untrustworthy. They wholly contradict one another in important matters—contradictions are there in the same gospel - thereby affording us another proof that there is no question in them of a single definite person and of historical recollections but a mere collection of details taken from very different sources, as Drews remarks (p. 254). They give false reports—reports inconsistent with authenticated history. Luke is said to be the "historian" *par excellence*. But he is equally bad in his references, as, for example, in : "In the days of King Herod ;" "At the time of enumeration under the governor Cyrenius ;" "When Lisenius the tetrarch was at Abilene and everyman had to be numbered." Herod had died before the present era began. Cyrenius was not governor until the years 7—11 A. D. Lisenius had died thirty-four years before Jesus was born. Annas and Caiaphus could not be high-priests together. (For Lucan mendacity, see also *The Solution of the Synoptic Problem*, p 33). The description of the Pharisees is wrong (wrong because of a purpose). The trial and condemnation are

inconsistent with Jewish practices. The friendship between Herod and Pilate (*Luke* 23[12]) is unknown to historians. Also the character of Pilate as depicted in the gospels *does not consist with* historical records. Who knows that we have not here an astral myth merging the *Homo-pilatus* (the Javelin-man Orion) into the Roman procurator Pilate and thereby supplying the motive for placing the story in the time of the first two emperors, in spite of historical incongruities arising out of that fact. It can be detached from that period without suffering any essential change. It is, like all myths, independent of time. In many details, the roots of the gospel-narrative are found in the astral relations. According to Niemojewski, "the Christ hanging on the cross or world-tree (i. e. the milky way) is killed by Pilatus" (Orion, the Javelin-man In the Hindu conception Orion is a swordsman. Cp. Tilak) with the lance-constellation (*Sagitti*) supposed to be very long in the Greek myth. It appears in the Christian legend as Longinus, and in the gospel of John as the soldier who pierces the side of Jesus with a spear (*longche* in Greek). We shall see hereafter that Dr. Drews does not accept this particular astral interpretation as he has got one of his own. Besides, the fictitious character of the gospel-account is put beyond doubt by many other historical and natural inaccuracies, such as the massacre of Bethlehem children, people wandering hither and thither for census purposes, the astronomically impossible eclipse of the sun at the death of Jesus, and so on. Yet pious people read the Bible as a Holy Writ and an infallible document of real events without feeling any qualms. So, it is not for nothing that Augustine in despair exclaimed : "Were it not for the authority of the Church I should put no faith in the gospels." However, the greatest defect of Mark, most fatal to his claim to be historical, according to Wellhausen, is that "*We learn as much about the week in Jerusalem as about the year in Galilee.*" (J. P. p. 60). Yes, the story of the occurrences in Jerusalem which deserves a separate treatment by itself because of its egregiously mythical character, in its details, is incongruous in this incoherent jumble of miracles. "The very fact that *S. Mark* devoted six chapters out of sixteen to events which took place in the precincts of Jerusalem makes me suspicious," remarks the very Rev. Mr. Wright in a very helpless attitude. "Important though the passion was", continues he, an orthodox Pádre, in his *N. T. Problems*, "*it seems to be narrated at undue length.* The proportions of history are destroyed" (p. 176). If history it be ! No one need forget that we would be pursuing the proverbial *will-o-the-wisp* if we at all hoped to find real history in it. "The literary quality of the gospels, their tendentious dogmatic-

metaphysical character, their chronological and topographical vagueness, their constant absence of definite indications of space and time in regard to events, the slender traces of an apparently historical and geographical framework, the resemblance of their most important details to the myths of non-Christian religions—a resemblance that often extends to the smallest points—all this demands," says Dr. Drews in bringing to a close a very long-drawn but well-argued debate, "that we shall study the gospels from a very different point of view from that hitherto adopted. (*Witnesses*, p. 167).

Socrates and Jesus.

On the other hand let us institute a comparison, as done by Strauss, between the biographies of Socrates and Jesus, both of whom have got more than one chronicler of their life-stories. Matthew takes the place of Xenophon and John of Plato ; how excellently the one steps into the shoes of the other ! Matthew is a man of the matter-of-fact world and John is of a philosophising temperament. They should have supplemented each other as Xenophon and Plato, who agree in all essential points, do. There are many features, though peculiar to either, when taken together, would admirably combine into a harmonious whole producing one consistent image. But what a painful contrast we find when we come to the gospels ! What one solemnly avers, the other almost equally solemnly denies. If we consider all the gospels, we are overhead and ears in inconsistencies which no rational methods can reconcile. Take

Anointment a congeries of inconsistencies.

the simple thing—the *anointment of Jesus* by the woman. I enumerate only the main discrepancies, the details of which are to be found in Strauss's first edition. (1) *Time*—either the early or the latter part of Jesus' ministry ; either 2 days or 6 days before Passover ; either before the entry or after the entry into Jerusalem. (2) *Place*--Either Galilee or Judea ; Simon the leper's house or Marth's house. (3) *Person*—Either a public woman or Martha's sister Mary or one whose identity is unknown. (4) *Manner*—either the head or the feet were anointed. (5) *Objection*—either on the score of the woman's character or of wastefulness. (6) *Objector*—either the host or all the spectators or the disciples or Judas alone. (7) *Jesus*'s *defence*—either on the ground of the contrast of the woman's love with the Phrisees' or "the poor would always be with you."* Then

* One proffered explanation is that the four evangelists are narrating four distinct events. We have no objection ; we know that the evangelists manufactured fictions on their own account, independently of facts.

the historical(?) facts, one killing the other, have forced Strauss, himself gone beyond his depths in search of historicity, to say : "It is not agreeable to hear and therefore is disbelieved, but whoever has seriously examined the subject and chooses to be candid, knows as well as we do that few great men have existed of whose history we have so unsatisfactory a knowledge as we have of that of Jesus." In this connection one may with profit consult Smith's *Ecce Deus*, p. 106.

One other point in this connection. We have already referred to the thorny question as to the contrast between the Messiah and the Teacher. After summarising the controversy on the historicity of Jesus from Reimarus (1800) to Wrede (1901), in his *Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1910), and, after giving the result of his own debate with Wrede, Dr. Albert Schweitzer observes : "The coincidence between the work of Wrede [*The Messianic Secret in the Gospels*] and the *Sketch of the Life of Jesus* [by himself] is not more surprising in regard to the time of their appearance ["on the self-same day"] than in regard to the character of their contents......, Supposing that only a half, nay, only a third of the critical arguments which are common between Wrede and the *Sketch of the Life of Jesus* are sound, the modern historical view of the history is wholly ruined" (pp. 328-329). The issue between them is this : For Wrede, Jesus is a Teacher only. The Messianic claims are a mere manufacture of his followers after his death. Schweitzer finds that the Teaching Jesus is a documentary construction. If Jesus be not the Messiah, the Gospel-story as a whole crumbles to pieces. And what sort of a Messiah was he ? Schweitzer's Jesus was purely and simply a Jewish "hero and dreamer" (a deluded enthusiast ?) whose entire doctrine was the advent of the Kingdom of God, the ending of the old order, in which consummation, he secretly believed, he was to figure as the Messiah.* As in the case of our *Karmakánda* the *Purva Mimánsá* gave a short shrift to the *Devas* and the Gita to the *Yajnas*, so Wrede and Schweitzer between themselves have made short work of Jesus the Messiah and Jesus the Teacher, leaving Jesus the Exorcist and Thaumaturge as the residue whom the Unitarians and liberal Christians have very easily disposed of. "When thieves fall out honest men come to their own", so goes the proverb. Out of the fierce disputes of the theologians the truth emerges and the whole thing is

Wrede and Schweitzer killing each other.

* The Mahátmá declared in 1921 that "early next year" he would be called upon to draw up a constitution for the new order of things, as the old order would surely pass away by that time.

proved to be a myth. Such vital differences of opinion can be entertained about a myth only. The tragedy is due to the fact that the gospel-Jesus is wholly a manufactured figure whose limbs were added, under stress of diverse circumstances, from different motives which are now dissolving, one by one, into thin air before the search-light of historical criticism. Let us now hear Dr. Schweitzer (*The Quest.* *p. 396*) himself, a believer in a way in the atomic residue of historicity, who removes all the difficulties from our path by saying :

> The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the Kingdom of God, who founded the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth and died to give His work its final consecration, *never had any existence.*

Schweitzer a biographist in name only.

However, exception is taken to the inclusion of Schweitzer in the same category with Drews, Smith and Robertson. I see no harm in it. The objection can be raised on a technical ground only. Because the destructive side of his work inevitably leads to the myth-theory. If Schweitzer believes in a residuum of an unknown and unknowable founder of Christianity—barely one hundredth part of what the gospels give us, that is due simply to "the theologian's malady of self-contradiction." Robertson and his colleagues also avow the incorporation of incidents of the life of some real Jesus or Jesuses into the gospel-narrative. But that will not make the gospel-Jesus a historical person. Such historical matters are included in fictions also. From his book it is evident, as we have shown, that Wrede proves the eschatological Messiah to be a fiction, to whom only Schweitzer holds fast giving the go-by to Wrede's Teacher as a literary construction. Do they not between themselves destroy the whole edifice? The arguments of both sides are unanswerable, because they destroy the destroyable. If they still believe in the other half, it is simply because of the "sacred disease of the theologian" already alluded to, based on the logic of "loves me, loves me not," as the little girls say. And Dr. Schweitzer is quite aware of it, as he asserts that "*the modern historical view of the history is wholly ruined.*" The italics are mine. If a whole school of critics have been driven to the myth-theory, only the destructive work of these German theologians is responsible for it. This is the considered verdict of the most up-to-date critics. Says Rev. Dr. Maurice Jones : "The exponents of this [i.e. myth] theory assert that the historical-religious methods of the German Liberal school have reduced the authentic details of Christ's life to such negligible dimensions that it only remains to deny in

toto the very existence of a historical Jesus." (*The New Testament in the Twentieth Century*, p. 23). And what is the 'dimension' of Schweitzer's historical Jesus? He has offered us two alternatives i.e., either total scepticism or thorough-going eschatology and his eschatology gives us purely and simply a Jewish "hero and dreamer" who believed in the speedy end of the world and advent of the Kingdom of God where he would figure as the King-Messiah. He only dreamt of it but never gave it out. So, "he passes by our time and returns to his own" (p. 397). He can not live with us as our Teacher and Saviour, as modern historians would like to have him. Schweitzer is firmly convinced (S. p. 41) that "the historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence to religion" (p. 399). Schweitzer stands not for a historical Jesus, "the Jesus of the Gospels"; he manufactures a Jesus for his own consumption. Schweitzer has Jesus as spiritually arisen within men (p. 399).

Reducing Jesus to a phantom.

A word, by the way. Passages are not wanting, eulogising Jesus as an historical personage. This is the theologians' method. They do not fail to praise whom their historical criticism can not discern. They are unable, inspite of their scholarship, to get rid of the impression they received in their childhood from their Christian environment and their Christian training, as we have already said. Tradition gets the better of their erudition. All avowal of historicity notwithstanding, to Schweitzer Jesus, as far as he is historical, is only a "dreamer." Harnack and Loisy, to take only two out of a legion, will not fail to eulogise the historical Jesus whom they, nevertheless, represent "as beyond measure visionary, as in fact insane" (*Ecce Deus*, p. xv). I do not think Robertson and Drews are more irreverent and less historical. And Loisy is a Roman Catholic Churchman and Harnack the very pillar of historicity. Schmiedel, the inventor of the "pillar passages" for proving the historicity of Jesus, does not find a single utterance of Jesus, as given in the gospels, to be genuine. Yet, he writes volumes on those utterances. But he is conscious of the weakness of the position (S. p. 135) and, therefore, observes: "My inmost religious convictions would suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that Jesus never lived." (*Jesus in Modern Criticism*, p. 85). Alfred Edersheim, already referred to in pp. 57 and 242 in various connections, though he has consulted about 400 authorities on the life of Jesus, comes to the following conclusion in the preface of his book, *Jesus the Messiah*: "To take

Biographists' avowal of "no history."

the lowest view, the materials for it [*i.e.* for the life of Christ] do not exist". Yet, he has not failed to write a life of Christ in two volumes, running to about 15 hundred royal octavo pages. I allude to all this because readers should not, from these stray quotations, go away with the idea that the panegyric amounts to any critical decision about the historicity of Jesus. The avowal in the belief of historicity is a shibboleth of the theologian, born of prepossession. What is the conclusion, pray, of Schweitzer about the historical merit of the gospellers, though the quotation bestows upon them a high praise of authenticity ? At the beginning he drew from his imagination, but the result of mature criticism has been quite different. If the historical Jesus be not grounded on "a purely eschatological Messianic conception" as his, then, Schweitzer would take the gospel Jesus as grounded on "a literary fiction of the earliest Evangelists" (p. 396). And he has condemned "the torn and tattered gospel" of Mark, right and left, for its being inventions and contradictions (Chaps. X and IX). Yet, with this gospel only, according to him, "modern historical theology with its three-quarters scepticism is left at last" (p. 307). The rest he flings to the four winds. "As a result of the work of the Higher Criticism the four gospels are a complete wreck as historical records", says the Rev. K. C. Anderson D. D. in the *Hibbert Journal* for January, 1911. And on such testimony we are asked to believe that Jesus was more historical than Socrates !

I must stop, but not before making Scheweitzer himself give a categorical reply. As the result of the quest of the historical Jesus from Reimarus to Wrede he finds out "Jesus to be designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism and clothed by modern theology in a historical garb" (p. 396) i. e., the gospel Jesus is a manufacture, pure and simple. Schweitzer has conclusively proved, in spite of his own earlier assumption to the contrary, that "the Jesus of the gospels" had no historical existence. Now, an author's opinion is to be determined not by dogmatic assumptions made at ease at the outset but by the result of his laborious critical research.

Christ a mystic ideal.

If Albert Schweitzer is a pious Christian, such *Christians* are as plentiful as blackberries in the Bráhma Samáj, though they do not care a fig for the historicity of the gospel account. To them Dhruvas and Prahládas are as historical! Dr. Anderson stands for such an ideal. "What can it interest the people of to-day to know what took place in Palestine two thousand years ago", argues this Doctor of Divinity. The *Living Christ* is the symbol of the divine in man, the historical Jesus having no spiritual significance and religious value. "Why not listen to the mystic who", demands the

Doctor, "tells us that it is nothing less than idolatry to fix our thought on and worship a historical Jesus who is supposed to have lived in Palestine two thousand years ago, that as flesh-and-blood Christ is a contradiction in terms, and that what the gospel writers intended to give the world was not history or biography, but spiritual allegory or drama. If this theory fits the facts as the historical theory does not, this will be the proof of its truth". The so called destroyers of the historicity of Jesus do not claim more. Says Mr. Robertson: "It was because at every step the effort to find historical foundation failed utterly that after years of investigation I sought and found in a thorough application of the myth-theory the solution of the enigma. Invariably that gives light where the historical assumption yields darkness" (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 15). There is little room for choice between the devout clergyman and the avowed rationalist. But the objection to the myth-theory is most pathetically summarised by Rev. Dr. Maurice Jones in the following terms: "If the Christ-myth theory is true, and Jesus never lived, the whole civilised world has for close upon two thousand years lain under the spell of a lie, and the greatest power for good that the world has ever known originated in a delusion". (*The New Testament in the Twentieth Century*, p. 84). The first part of this objection has been the argument of old women of both sexes in all ages. So it should not concern us. The priests of Mithraism, at the beginning of the Christian era, would reply exactly in the same way as this Doctor of Divinity does in this present year of grace. Did not historian Mosheim only yesterday defend Mithra, Mercury and Zeus as historical persons? But the civilised world has outlived the demolition of that delusion. Has not man in his triumphant march towards truth demolished such supreme lies as virgin-birth and resurrection? And civilization has survived the shock! The other part of the objection is itself a veritable lie. History gives the lie direct to the assumption that Christianity at the start was a power for good; the movement is better explained by the pre-Christian *Jesus-cults* than by the tiny personality of the Jesus of the gospels. God-Jesus was worshipped by many sects, in the fusion of which the Christian Church originated. Observes Dr. Burnett Hillman Streeter: "Certain of the divergences between the Gospels, in particular, those between Matthew and Luke, are of such a character that it is difficult to believe that these books originated in the same Church or even in the same neighbourhood" (*The Four Gospels*, p. 11). But that is another story. Yet the civilization endures all the same.

Objections to myth-theory sentimental.

The result of historical criticism could not be otherwise, as the

picture had been drawn by many independent hands, from different points of view, for the period of a couple of centuries, piling together heaps of contradictions. In the Bhagavat Gitá also all phases of religious thought up-to-date had been compiled with this redeeming feature that some show of syncretism, if not synthesis, had been attempted. But this saving grace is wholly wanting in the gospels, Jesus was being made to reflect all the conflicting doctrines of the age, the writers harbouring no discomfort in their minds on that score and taking no pains to reconcile them. We could not expect it either; the hotch-potch character of the gospels being entirely due to different persons poking their nose into the affair, independently of one another, as occasions arose. Says Mr. A. T. Robertson: "There are numerous interpolations in various manuscripts of the New Testament, some of them very interesting. It is not to be wondered at," continues this orthodox author in palliation of its seriousness, "that during the long centuries some scribes made marginal notes that crept into the text." (*Studies in Mark's Gospel* p. 129). But the extenuation of one difficulty gives rise to another of a more serious nature. How to know the original from the note? Who determines that what is known as the original is not a note of an earlier scribe? Why may not the whole thing partake of the nature of what is called the *note*. And it is easily detected that these *notes* were made with a purpose. The Bethlehem episode is due to the Messianic claim of the Davidic descent. But, as some Messianists denied the necessity of such a descent, a story is introduced where Jesus repudiates it. But to pit against all this, the Fourth gospel substitutes a world-Logos for the descendant of David, as without this Logos-idea Christianity could have no foot-hold in the Gentile world. Whether in Chaldean or Egyptian mysticism, in Persian Mithraism or in Platonic Philosophy, or in the neo-Platonic cosmogony of Philo, Logos was the central figure of all theosophies. Written either at Alexandria or at Ephesus, by a cosmopolitan Jew of the Dispersion or a Gentile convert, the Fourth gospel was designed from the sheer necessity of self-preservation, even if it was to overthrow the Messianism of the other gospels. And their hope was already dissipated, as the predicted time for the dissolution had gone and a religion for the obstinate world had to be provided that might hold its own against the rivals. In one place the Messiah is made to preach the especially Judaic *Kingdom of*

Gospel account a medley of mutually destructive accumulations of ages, Jewish and Gentile.

Logos idea indispensable.

Heaven, with the especial claim of the poor in it. Scarcely has the thunder of this kingdom subsided in our ears when we are told that it is a spiritual kingdom. And before the hearer sufficiently recovers from his perplexity, it is anounced that "the kingdom of heaven is among you" (S. p. 12). In one place we learn that the Samaritans are outside the pale of the kingdom, in the very next place the ideal neighbour of the citizens of the kingdom is found among this hated people; nay more! The Messiah himself goes among the Samaritans. For once the bigoted Jew is easily made to play the part of a Stoic cosmopolitan; then the lover of his enemies silently slides into the bitter hater of opponents. The fulfiller of the Mosaic Law forthwith turns out its superseder! On analysis in the light of comparative study, all varieties of ideals, Jewish, Pagan and Gnostic, not even shorn of their foibles and futilities, are found jumbled together in the name of Jesus, because, as Mr. Robertson concludes :

> He is the heterogeneous product of a hundred mutually frustrative hands, a medley of voices that never was and could not be in one personality. Through his supernatural mask there speak the warring sects and ideals of three centuries: wisdom and delusion, lenity and bitterness ventriloquize in turns in his name. Even as the many generations of Jewish teachers had preluded all their changing counsels with a "thus saith the Lord," so did their Christist successors seek to mint their cherished dogmas, their rigid prejudices, and their better inspirations, with the image and superscription of the new Logos, the growing God of a transforming world. The later product is thus as unreal as the older (S. H. C. p. 10).

CHAPTER XIV.

Triumphal Entry.

Both *Satapatha* and *Aitareya Bráhmanas* place human sacrifice—*purusha-medha*—at the top of the list of sacrifices. It is more than we can say whether the *Rishis* meant logical or chronological priority. That the latter may also be the case is to be proved, if at all, by wide inductive investigations and that proof we have got on the authority of Dr. Frazer Vide *Golden Bough*). The student of history knows that as civilization advances the human sacrifice retreats to the background, leaving its substitutes behind. First, such parts of the body as fingers, nails, hair, etc., take the place of the body. Then we pass from the human to the animal victim, from larger animals to smaller ones ; from real animals to baked or clay models ; finally to grains, fruits, figures, paper or other symbols. Ritual murders at last dwindled into ritual mysteries or masquerades. Time came when in the place of the cannibalistic sacrament, some thing else was substituted with the ritual formula of" body and blood". So the Eucharist or the Holy Supper arose as in the cults of Mithra, Dionysos, Attis, and also Hebrew private sacraments. Such sacraments are not wanting also in India even to-day, only too mystical for vulgar eyes. At a certain stage some humane kings persuaded the priests, or the devotees themselves chose, to accept, in the place of the rite of animal sacrifice, a ritual or mystery drama as in the religions of Dionysos, Osiris or Adonis.

Actual human sacrifice reduced to ritual.

Now to apply these mytho-anthropological generalisations to the Biblical accounts, we take first the Entry into Jerusalem. We have in another connection (S. p. 169) unfolded the spiritual significance of the Egypt-Jerusalem myth. Myths are generally multifocal and the Entry is a combination of many myth-elements. To ride an unbroken colt in a noisy procession is an impossible history, but an excellent myth. First, take the Old Testament motive—We read in *Zech.* 11[9] : "Upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Not one but two asses ! The zodiacal sign of the Ass and Foal is Babylonian. The Greeks call the sign of Cancer "(the) Asses." There is a Gnostic gem showing a crab (*Cancer*) at the top and an ass suckling its foal below, with the inscription :

D. N. IHV. XPS. DEI FILIUS:

Dominus Noster Jesus Christus, Son of God (C. M. p. 341).

This is a representation of the sun entering the sign of Cancer. Our *Holi* festival according to Prof. J. C. Roy, is "certainly celebrated to mark certain astronomical events" (*Modern Review*, Sept., 1922). In connection with it there is *Mud Ceremony* in which a mock king seated, preferably, on an ass is led in a royal procession, tarred and feathered, but at the end is worsted in multifarious ways. Let us compare the account of the Sacaean mock king and his doom in Andrew Lang's *Magic and Religion*, Chap. IX. Of course, the victim was resurrected. As in our mud festival, so here also, the companions of the mock king make raids and commit loots. However, no loot is mentioned in the gospels except what is done in the Temple. The combination of the two clashing elements in the Biblical legend—acclamation of Jesus as 1) "the King of the Jews" which was afterwards inscribed on the cross—absurd as it is on the very face of it. and the demand by the same multitude in a couple of days, (2) "Crucify him", has been a hard nut for the biographists to crack. Both Sir J. G. Frazer (*Golden Bough*) and Mr. Reinach (*Cultes*) agree that no Roman Governor would dare to allow that if it were a real crucifixion. M. Loisy has rejected the latter as unhistorical. Brand also has dismissed it. Strauss hesitates. But he had only the Old Testament motives to guide him Our mental horizon has since been infinitely widened by the study of comparative mythology. The two conflicting elements are reconciled when we realise that the acclaimed *king* seated on an *ass* was actually a part of the ritual in which he was to be sacrificed—his crucifixion, as an important detail of the ceremony, being consistently demanded by the same people who led him in a royal procession. It is a practice in Bengal that the sacrificial goats when purchased are led to the place of worship in a procession with bands and music, both vocal and instrumental. So the *ass* meets us here from three directions. From the biographical standpoint the entry, such a triumphal entry as recorded in the gospels, can not take place. It can not be historical. No Roman Governor could allow this without risking crucifixion himself. For the conviction of Jesus, then, no trial before Pilate, no witnesses, to procure which the Jewish authorities were so much in worry, would be required (*infra* Ch. xvi). If the entry had been an historical fact, Pilate should have arrested Jesus in the midst of the procession and hanged him from the bough of the nearest tree, not nailed on the cross after a trial. Therefore it is no wonder

Processional entry ceremonial.

that Schweitzer would say : "The entrance into Jerusalem, understood as a Messianic ovation, remains an enigma" (*The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, p. 133 ; see also S. p. 108).

It will not be out of place to remark that at the earlier stages of the myth the cross was not much in evidence. Early crucifixion was not always a nailing either, but hanging by the arms. In the *Acts* 5^{30}, the apostles speak of Jesus, "whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree". Curiously enough Rájá Rámmohun Roy referred to the cross as a "tree" both in his Bengali and English Satire, *The Three Chinese Converts*. The cross is a pre-Christian symbol. Osiris, a pagan Saviour-God, used to be actually represented in the form of a crucifix. Paul says, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (*Gal.* 6^{17}). This is also pre-Christian, being the Syrian practice of *stigmata* previously used by Osirians. Cp. Drews' *Christ-myth* and Robertson's *Pagan Christs*. Lillie has shown from paintings how the sign of the cross developed from the zodiacal sign of Pisces (*Buddhism in Christendom*, pp. 213-215).

Cross borrowed.

At the time of the Christian era the sun had entered the Pisces and the Christ was called the divine Fish. From this also the legend of his parthenogenetic birth arose (see the Addendum). And Jesus was born the second time in the waters of the Jordon : of course, a fragment of an astral myth. Mithraic zodiac begins at Aquarius. Myths are multifocal indeed !

Fish-myth.

However, the myth-theory removes this two-fold difficulty of the gospel account and it is done by the myth-theory only. Hailing as the king with so much fuss and then asking to 'crucify him' can not form the part of an actual biography, as we have said. When they are taken to be parts of a sacrificial ceremony—crucifixion and its earlier adjunct, the royal procession—no contradiction arises, as both the cries are ceremonial. Says Dr. Frazer: "The description of His [Christ's] last trumphal ride into Jerusalem reads almost like an echo of that brilliant progress through the streets of Susa which Haman [Elamite victim-God] aspired to and Mordecai [Marduk(?) the Babylonian God] accomplished" (as quoted in Lang's *Magic and Religion*, p. 302). The ride is, of course, followed by a veritable raid (possibly never allowed unless ceremonial) on the Temple, mimicking the license given to the divine victims (necessarily ceremonially divine !) in all sacrificial cases. Even the relation with a harlot is not exempted, however innocuous the nature of the relation has been made in this particular instance. This is indeed

Myth-theory the only solution of the contradiction.

due to the progress of human society. If, on the other hand, the procession and the raid etc., were real, some preparations would be necessary and that would amount to their being parts of a rebellious movement. If not earlier, it must have been checked at its actual occurrence. But, considered as a preliminary of the known ceremony, no governor was concerned to take any notice of it and Pilate did not. Being made the factors of an actual event of life they could not but be separately treated for the purpose of gospel-making. So the contradiction arose from the separation of the two elements. From the Palm Sunday to the Crucifixion day there is an interval of five days. In the Babylonian Sacaea festival, probably a spring festival, the mock king would actually be given the royal prerogative to do anything for five days between the start and his death. (See *Golden Bough*). And this period the gospeller has well utilised in turning the victim into a good Teacher, thereby separating the Entry and the Crucifixion. The interval in the gospel story is filled by impossible acts. The first thing Jesus does after entering Jerusalem is to "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrow the tables of the money-changers and seats of them that sold the doves", and this was done without any opposition from any quarter! "If it really happened", so impossible it appeared to Origen that he took it to be one of the greatest miracles of Jesus. Yes, if it were an incident in actual life! But it is a part of the myth—an act of royal prerogative allowed to the victim in his alloted five days' reign. As to the Old Testament motive why Jesus should be made to come to Jerusalem to cleanse the temple and die there, see *Isaiah* i; *Zechariah* xiv; and *Jeremiah* vii. The following is found in *Malachi* 3^{1-3}: "The Lord...shall suddenly come to his temple...and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi".

Temple raid—its O. T. motive.

Jesus here has been made a holy Messiah. So, licenses given to the victims of the primitive sacrifices could not be thought of in his connection. But the act attributed to Jesus is disorderly enough to remind one of the liberties enjoyed by the ancient ritual victims. This act serves a doctrinal purpose also and betrays an anti-Judaic hand. The Fourth gospel gives Jesus "a scourge of small cords" to do the purification of the temple. But that is in imitation of the Egyptian Saviour-God Osiris who bears a scourge as the God of retribution. Though psychologically impossible and historically proved unfounded, interested people wax eloquent over the reformative character of the incident

Temple reform turns out a myth.

forgetting that a real reform is the change of heart. No real reform is effected through the arbitrament of muscular force, vocal or instrumental. But this is right royal Jesuine method —the severe and angry rebuke or the use of physical force, as in this case. Subsequent history cuts the ground from beneath its moral justification also, as appears from the following extracts: "This, as it seems to me, is" observes Dr. Abrahams, "an error made by many commentators on the gospels, who seek to expand the often enough just criticism of Jesus against abuses into an unjust condemnation of the whole Pharisaic system" (*Pharisaism and the Gospels*, pp. 87-88). But what has been the result of the cleansing? Very little good comes to the world by overturning the table, i.e., trying to make men virtuous by force. The change of heart is one thing needful, and Jesus' method was directly opposed to the right and therefore the psychological one. "Last Easter" (1898), Dr. Abrahams informs us, "I was in Jerusalem and along the facade of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre I saw the stalls of vendors of sacred relics, of painted beads and inscribed ribbons, of coloured candles, guilded crucifixes and bottles of the Jordon water. There these Christians babbled and bargained, a crowd of buyers and sellers in front of the Church sacred to the memory of Jesus." Whether under *Law* or *Grace* if the heart is not changed, men remain the same, though the table is overturned either by the Messiah or by the police sergeant. By whatever name you call it the scarlet flower smells not, you can not force nature.

From here Jesus goes to Bethany to lodge in a leper's house (*Matt.* 26[6]). This an ordinary man could not do, the leper being a socially ostracised person according to the Mosaic Law. There he allowed a public woman to anoint his head—objectionable enough even in the case of a man of some social standing; not to speak of Jesus, the ideal Teacher. But such sexual licenses were very common among the ancient sacrificial victims. All these anti-Legal acts together with the cursing of the fig tree serve the doctrinal purpose that Jesus came to replace the old order. The anti-Judaic writer has utilised them in his own way, thereby killing two birds with one stone. This act, however, brings us once again in touch with the ritual sacrifice in which the victim would be anointed for his doom.

Jesus' vagaries ritual.

We witness that the sacrificial goat is anointed with vermilion etc., sometimes with *ghee* (clarified butter) also, before it is actually killed. Flowers and leaves too are put on the head. Human sacrifices have been discontinued,

Anointing too.

we are not familiar with *its* rituals. However, one other feature of the animal sacrifice which deserves notice is that, as soon as the consecrational *Mantra* is uttered, the animal is raised to the divine status. And the animal must be *sinless*, physically of course, i.e., the victim must not be diseased, wounded, or disfigured and mishaped in any way.

Victim sinless.

Sinless himself, he is made a sacrifice for the sins of others. The Old Testament motive for the ointment is found in the *Psalm* 23[5] : "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil." The gospellers, as is expected, have not failed to bring the "table" and "enemies" together, as the ointment was poured when Jesus sat at meal within and the Jews were plotting outside. The historicity of the anointment episode is forthwith set aside by a dozen discrepancies in the gospel account—some fatal to the least claim to historicity. They become too apparent to escape the notice even of a superficial reader when the four gospels are compared as shown before, p. 293. The reason is that the event was somehow to be incorporated in this very simple enactment on some extrahistorical grounds.

ADDENDUM :—

Anent The Fish-Myth.

When we pray : *Thy will be done on the earth as in heaven*, we are not aware that a world of mystery lies hidden in the term "heaven. The sun is the Lord of heaven and all great Gods are the sun-Gods. Osiris of the Egyptians, Attis of the Phrygians, Adonis of the Syrians, Mithra of the Persians, Vishnu, and for the matter of that Krishna, of the Hindus are all sun-Gods. All these cults originated in astronomical myths fed by tributaries. The Jesus-cult can not be an exception to the ancient rule. And there is nothing to be concerned at in it. The marvels of human productions, the spiritual ones not excepted —all owe their greatness to Evolution. The all-comprehensive term *Brahman*, as we now understand it, began its career in the remote past with a very insignificant connotation. The fish-God is a very deep-rooted idea in Oriental religions. The first *Avatár* of Vishnu, ostensibly the sun-God, is the Fish, the Egyptian Horus had long been "the Fish." The idea had its start perhaps in some insular country from the fancy that the Sun was a fish as he dived in the sea every evening. Latterly the idea developed in connection with the zodiacal signs. The sun-Gods were alternately connected with one or other of the *signs* from long past, as the sun entered either during the equinoxes or solstices. Thus the Bull was the symbol of Dionysos. People do

not allow the past to pass away easily. Though, by the precession of the equinoxes, the sun had no longer entered the *Taurus* during the vernal equinox—the time of the Crucifixion—but had begun to enter the constellation of *Aries*, and therefore the lamb must naturally be made and was actually made the symbol of the then sun-Gods such as Mithra etc., and of the Christ for the matter of that, we find the *bull* too on the monuments of the Christian era (P. C. 301). This may also be due to the Dionysaik influence on the Christian cult. Among the Gnostics the idea of Divine Fish came from Horus and from the Gnostics the Christians got it. This change from the lamb to the fish had its peculiar motive. The lamb was the symbol of both Judaism and Mithraism and especially the latter was in possession of the field. And they say, brooks make wider difference than oceans. Therefore the Egyptian symbol was preferred. For some time the fish held its sway as the sacred emblem of the Eucharists. And by the precession of equinoxes—the *Pisces* being next to *Aries*, the vernal equinox actually took place in the fish constellation when the symbol came into vogue (P. C. p. 302). "Christians are called the little fish" and Christ is represented as a fisherman, while he promises his apostles that they shall be "fishers of men." It is a remarkable coincidence that in the *Maháyán* scriptures Buddha too is spoken of as a fisherman who catches fish, drawing them out of the ocean of *samsára* into the light of salvation. This explains the strange phenomenon that there are Buddhist pictures and figures which represent the Buddha with rod and hook in the attitude of fishing—a highly un-Buddhistic action, if interpreted literally (O. C. p. 357, 1911). It is also said: "If Christ had not been a fish he could not have risen from the dead" (Ibid. p. 437). Moreover:

> Present Christianity knows nothing of a fish Eucharist and if we did not possess definite indications and inscriptions proving that such an institution existed, we would scarely believe it, for it is never mentioned in the Church history nor in any official doctrines of the Church (p. 520). It is interesting to meet here [the Birdpur estate in the Tarai] in the Sákya tomb of Buddha with an ancient religious symbol, the fish, which has gained a renewed significance in Christianity through the strange coincidence that the Greek word meaning "fish" was interpreted as an acrostic of the words "Jesus, Christ, God's Son [our] Saviour" (p. 34, 1910). "About the beginning of the Christian era the year-opening constellation was Pisces; and the Divine Fish accordingly figures to a great extent in early Christian symbols" (S. H. C. p. 59).

CHAP. XV.

Passion and Betrayal.

The Triumphal Entry and after together with the five days' respite, as already pointed out, has been utilised by the evangelists to turn Jesus into a Teacher which, according to Dr. Schweitzer, is only a documentary construction. What follows viz., the Biblical Supper, Passion, Betrayal and Trial are only a transcription from a drama. And this "story of the Passion is," asserts Wundt, "with the exception of a few details of sufficient historical credibility, a tissue of legends".

Supper quite unhistorical.

But the question raised by Dr. Drews as to these *details* has remained unanswered. We have already referred to the Masquerade or Mystery Drama to which the original sacrificial ritual with its sacramental feast was ultimately reduced. This sacramental feast was an important institution of the early Community. It was the original of the Lord's Supper which, if an act of Jesus' life, is taken by the theologian A. Eichhorn as an historical impossibility. "How were the disciples to understand", most pertinently the scholar asks in his *Das Abendmahl*, "that they ate the body of Christ who was about to be put to death, and drank his blood, though not the blood present in his body, but that about to be shed soon ?" The mystic sense of the Supper is in direct contradiction to what the theologians eulogise in the simplicity of the words of Jesus. Moreover, we find this festive supper as instituted by Jesus in his own "*memory*" only in *Luke* and in an interpolated passage in Paul. *Matthew* and *Mark* know nothing of it. So Julicher is not far from truth when he says that Jesus was not the founder of anything as he was to come again and, as he averred, he had no idea of so long a period of the future. The truth is, when the liturgy was prepared, modifying that of an original ritual sacrifice for the use of the community, it was put in the mouth of Jesus for better effect. "Among the Syrian (Nestorian) Christians, the Eucharist came to be regarded as a sort of magic rite" (V. C., p. 58). The so called historians took the earliest opportunity to restore it to its original status. The Eucharist developed from a very ancient magic rite which was latterly made a part of Jesus-story. And this is the method how in all ages people change the old or introduce the new pursuing the line of the least resistance. However, the supper, as we see it in the gospels, ended with a hymn as in *Matthew* 26[30]. The hymn betrays its liturgical origin.

Nobody can give any reason why the scene at once shifted

to Mount Olives and thence to Gethsemane at night, except that some *one* was going to his death of his own free-will and that with full prevision. This is dramatic, because it is possibly enacted in a drama only. Nobody has any right to raise any question, because that *one* is Divine **one** ! And to divine ones no act is unreasonable. But at Gethsemane something more divine happens. Jesus takes aside three disciples to pray, * but the latter sleep on (S. p. 182) while he utters a *set* prayer thrice. He comes and goes but they sleep on. There are several *exits* and *enters*. But who reported them to the gospel writers ? Those who are supposed to have heard were sleeping all along. The writers must be inspired ! Dramatising the whole thing Mr. Robertson shows that this absurdity has cropped up, because a drama has been put in a narrative form. In a drama no one is provoked to ask such questions, because things are *seen* there. And there is internal evidence that it was originally a drama. No sense can be made out of the following as given in *Mark* and *Metthew* :

Gethsemane scene dramatic.

> And again he came and found them sleeping—and they wist not *what to answer him* [there is no question of answering as nothing has been said]. And he cometh the third time, saith unto them, *sleep on now, and take your rest : it is enough ; the hour is come ;* behold the son of man is betrayed......Arise now......

Dramatise and *nonsense* is turned lucid :

> The disciples still asleep.
>
> *Enter* Jesus
>
> Jes ; Sleep on now and take your rest (*Exit*)
>
> Enter Jesus (*Disciples still asleep*).
>
> Jes : It is enough : the hour is come etc.

The gospel version is an impossibility in an original narrative. It is a transcription and in the transcription of a play such combinations of different speeches happen. Here two speeches have been mingled and fused together and an anomaly has been the result. The biographical school has made confusion worse confounded by their efforts on historicisation. The darkness is dispelled and the atmosphere clears up by the simple admission that "the transcriber missing an *exit* and an *enter* has simply run two speeches together : and the gospel

* "The scene in the garden of Gethsemane is provoked by Genesis 23[3-5] where Abraham takes with him his son Isaac and two servants, and bids them wait and pray while he goes with Isaac to sacrifice the latter. There is also a reference to Elisha, when he falls asleep under a bush as he flies from Ahab, and is twice awakened by an angel." (Drews.)

copyists have faithfully followed their manuscript, putting "they wist not what to answer him" in the wrong place" (*Jesus Problem*).

Being outwitted here the theologian still argues that the above theory is out of order if the midnight trial before the priests, elders and scribes is taken into consideration. In the first place, the midnight trial itself has been disposed of by Mr. Loisy as an impossibility, because the search for witnesses in the dead of night in those days in an eastern city could never take place. In the second place, only dramatisation can give any plausibility to the scene as, say, in *Mark:*

> They sought (false) testimony and found it not. *For many bare false witness against him* and their witness agreed not together. And there *stood up certain,* and bare false witness against him....... And not even so did their witness agree together. And the high priest stood up......

There is no difficulty to return to the dramatised form as done by Robertson :

> *Priest* (or other official, to officials). Go and bring the witnesses to convict this fellow. (*Exeunt* Officials)
>
> *Priest consults with his fellows.*
>
> *Enter* Officials with a witness. *Exeunt* Officials.
>
> Witness is examined : the evidence is confused.
>
> *Enter* Officials with another witness. *Exeunt*
>
> Witness is examined : evidence conflicts with that already given.
>
> (*And so with a series of witnesses*).
>
> *Enter* Officials with two more witnesses
>
> Witnesses, examined, testify with some contradictions in detail, "This man said"—etc.
>
> High Priest (*standing*) : Answerest thou nothing ? etc.

The thing is that it is only in a drama that an impossible narrative *can pass* as possible, because in the stage time is more or less ignored.

But before we take up the *trial* in details for consideration it is worthwhile to make a passing reference to the Betrayal which is a fiction in all conscience. It does not fit in with the narrative. Judas was employed to point out a man who never made a secret of his movements (S. p. 157). If the betrayal be historical the only irresistible biographical conclusion would be that Jesus was an obscure person not known to the public. Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* (a book written in the second half of the 2nd century) justifies this conclusion. Trypho says: "If he (Christ) was born and lived somewhere, he

Betrayal a fiction. (S. p. 157).

is entirely unknown." Here is a quiet hint about the impossibility of the historical existence of the gospel Jesus. The story was a grafting on a cult-God as is assumed by Professor Cheyne who rejects the fiction of betrayal altogether: "That the God-man, whose cult in certain Jewish circles was probably pre-Christian, was called by a name which underlies Joshua [see *infra* Ch. xx.] has become to me, on grounds of my own, very possible, and it is to me much more than merely possible that Jesus of Nazareth was not betrayed or surrendered to the Jewish authorities whether by Judas or by any one else" (*Hibbert Journal*, 1911, p. 891). And this is not a wholly unwarranted assertion as one hand visibly at work in the gospels is trying all along to make Jesus shy of his Messianic claims. Taking his clue from this, Dr. Schweitzer has formed a theory of his own:

> Jesus was a "dreamer." He was dreaming a dream of his Messiahship in secret and, occasionally only, dropped hints of it to his disciples. Judas sold the secret to the priests.

Then, we are authoritatively told, the above fragment only is left of Jesus after an historical survey in Germany "from Reimarus to Wrede." It is only in a myth that exegetes can differ so widely. We have already pointed out (S. p. 261) how Wrede in Germany has combated the view of Schweitzer as to Jesus' Messiaship. Of the two most important Unitarian divines of England, Dr. Martineau tries to show in his *Seat of Authority* that Jesus did not claim to be the promised Messiah. But Dr. Carpenter differs from him. To him the entry into Jerusalem would then be meaningless. To us, however, such a controversy is always a reminder of the dispute about the size of the tiger in Bankim's famous novel, *Kapála-Kundalá !* (S. p. 113).

O. T. motive of the drama.

The story is a late invention founded on *Isaiah* 3^{1-2}. The inspiration of "the thirty pieces of silver" as "the price of him that was pierced" firstly came from *Zechariah* 11^{12-13} as pointed out by Robertson, and not from "the prophet Jeremy" as *Matthew* 27^{9} has stated through a confusion. In the second place, "the price" is always insisted on in the case of the sacrificial victim. The absurdity of the story comes out in a quite different but humourous way. In the Fourth gospel 12^{6}, Judas is said to have had the charge of the treasury of the Christian community which he pilfered, as his necessity arose. So the motive is not clear why he would agree to forego this permanent source of income for a paltry sum once for all. It is evident that the gospellers were themselves aware that they were jotting down some

absurd tale and they made no secret of their motive. They wrote because it was written in the Scriptures. The Old Testament motive made the betrayal by a friend an obvious necessity, however absurd the actual circumstances might make it. 2 *Sam.* XV tells us that Jesus' alleged ancestor David was so betrayed. Jesus has only been made a chip of the old block. The prediction of Judas' treason is worked out from the *Psalm* 41⁹: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, has lifted up his heel against me". Now, with the betrayal money a piece of land was bought, wherefore it was called "the field of blood unto this day" (*Matt.* 27⁸). This remark i. *e.*, *unto this day*, betrays that they were remembering some ancient history and not writing of recent occurrences as an immediate disciple is expected to do. The passage has other difficulties including the one that it is inconsistent with the fate of Judas as well as of his money as reported in *Acts* 1¹⁸. However, the story of the Betrayal is a *betrayal* of the mythical character of the whole drama. How is it that the ideal man who came simply to show the way to the blind did not restrain from utter ruin the unfortunate creature who was running headlong to perdition? Jesus knew it from the first (*John* 6⁶⁴) but did not intervene, nor did he eject him. Yet Judas was an apostle whom he himself chose to rule over one of the tribes of Israel in the Kingdom to come. Ah! I forget, it is written in the scriptures. So it must be made to happen however incompatable it may be with the actual course of nature! Consequently no exaggeration it is when Dr. Drews observes:—"The thing is historically so improbable, the whole story of the betrayal is so absurd historically and psychologically that only a few thoughtless Bible-readers can accept it with complacency." (*Witnesses*, p. 83). It is suggested that the legend of the traitor was introduced by the Pauline party to make room for the heretic apostle in the charmed circle of the Twelve, but the conspiracy was frustrated by the anti-Paulines who invented the fiction of the election of Matthias in the place of Judas. There is sufficient room for such humours in an invented story. But the nature of real history is quite different. And they could not help inventing such a story as one of the gospels was fathered on Matthew!

CHAPTER XVI

Trials of Jesus

For Trial the Betrayal is only the back-ground. Absurd on the very face of it as the betrayal is, the Trial, in that role, is hard to beat—though egregious absurdities are as plentiful in the gospels as blackberries in the autumn. Yet all absurdities therein put together will be no match for the Trial-scenes. So, the biographical school is in a sore strait here too (S. p. 280). Some hold the Trial to be the very pith and substance of the biography. M. Loisy maintains that if the Trial-story is given up, then the hope of the historicity of Jesus is gone. Yet of the four Trial-stories the *historians* among themselves have destroyed them all—one this, other that—Loisy himself going one better to supplement them with an ultra-evangelic story, rather, rehabilitating them by his own avowed inventions. How prepossession and special pleading overshadow one's better reason is well illustrated by Giovanni Rosadi's endeavour to white-wash the discrepancies in the Trial-proceedings. (Vide *The Trial of Jesus*, pp. 158—163). According to this innocent author the sentence of capital punishment at night which the Mosaic Law prohibits, instead of falsifying the Biblical accounts, as they betray an amount of unpardonable ignorance on the part of the gospel-writers, makes the Sanhedrim guilty of the violation of the Law, as if this Court of Jewish Elders would, if they could, playfully set the Law at naught on any occasion. Theological blindness can not go any further. Mr. Charles Stanley Lester in his *Historic Jesus* (1912) rejects both the gospel accounts of the Trials by the Sanhedrim as well as by Pilate. So is the case with the anonymous *Four Gospels as Historical Records* (Williams and Norgate. Vide J. P. p. 28). But M. Loisy fights tooth and nail for the latter. However incongruous historically, the Trial was an absolute necessity from the mythological standpoint as "such trials [mark the plural number], as we have seen, are common elements of the mock King's degradation" (Allen's *Idea of God*, Chap. XVIII. This chapter on the Growth of Christianity is a masterly survey of the parallelism even to the minutest details between the mythical enactments of some ancient saviour-gods and the Biblical accounts of the gospel-hero).

Trials are inconsistent and absurd.

Let us for the present summarise the result of historical criticism

on this point. 1. Only in *Luke* we find the third Trial before Herod and Herod had died long before this concocted affair entered into any body's head. Even a lunatic can not believe the story if this historical fact is brought to his notice. The record is *inspired* indeed! So the biographists had to give it up early. But they had not the courage of their conviction to put this pertinent question to themselves: What value should be attached to the beliefs of these men among whom such a *pure invention* could get such a *ready acceptance*? 2. The Fourth gospel account of the examination of Jesus by Annas the high priest, who sent him bound to the high priest (?) Caiaphas [there cannot be two high priests at the same time] from whom Jesus was immediately passed on to Pilate who, after examining him while Jewish priests remained outside, found him not guilty as the latter had told the governor—"My Kingdom is not of this world." This meaningless narrative has also been rejected. But the reconstructor, whoever he may be, fails to ask the reason why these myths were invented. But the truth readily flashes across the mind of the unsophisticated student of history. As a criminal or his lawful substitute had to be victimised in all such sacrificial myth-festivals, there was made almost a weird effort to represent Jesus as a criminal by as many as four "confused and contradictory" trials (Mr. Brodrick's *Trial and Crucifixion*, p. 70)—each fresh one being introduced or interpolated into the records to avoid some difficulties raised about the foregoing account. These inconsistencies and impossibilities can not be explained on any theory of historicity. But when the crucifixion is taken to be a myth of which all these preliminaries are mere accessories, all these anomalies become as clear as daylight. 3. The Trial before the high priests in the synoptics must also go out of account as totally incredible. Because the Jewish blasphemer could only be stoned by the Sanhedrim and not crucified by a heathen—the very thought of which was a sacrilege to the then Jewish mind. No prisoner according to the Jewish law must be sentenced to death on the day of his trial. Besides, it is unthinkable that the High Priest would pass an order for the execution of a man on the Passover day or the day after. Enelow after taking into consideration the pros and cons of the situation as well as the drift of the Jewish laws and customs for which, being a Jew himself, he is eminently competent, justly concludes: "The Jewish trial described in the Gospels is so full of irregularities and impossibilities that we may well assume that it represents a later assumption rather than an actual fact" (*A Jewish View of Jesus*, p. 143). Christian writers are never tired of proclaimin from the house-top that the death of

Jesus is more important than his life. Now the world is fully convinced that this death with all its paraphernalia was a latter-day manufacture from a motive. It is not a fact of biography but a fiction of theology. Strauss has the following on the priestly trial: "That the Sanhedrim on a night so sacred as that after the eating of Paschal lamb, and on a day so sacred as was the following first day of the feast, should have not only sent out armed servants (they did not forget to take "torches" in the full-moon night!) for the arrest of Jesus, but have undertaken personally to form a court, to go through the trial, to pass judgment, and lay an accusation before the Procurator, and then have induced the Romans to execute the sentence of death on such a day—all this is extremely improbable." What should we do or think under the circumstances? Why? "Dead or alive that is not the question, the question is whether the fever has left" as the Bengali adage tells us! No matter whether the gospels are destroyed, the trial must be saved at any cost. Nothing daunted, M. Loisy has proceeded to make havoc on the gospels and save the situation by manufacturing a trial story *de novo* on his own account. The midnight procedure is incredible. Well and good! Begin with dawn! This seems to be as innocent as a dove and wise also, though not quite adequate to cope with the situation Unfortunately he lived in the historical and scientific 19th century! If he had lived with the gospel makers he might have wrought wonders. M. Loisy proceeds:—

M. Loisy's attempt at reconstruction futile.

> As soon as the first day light had come, a reunion was held at the house of the chief priest, where it was without doubt arranged that they should content themselves with denouncing the Galilean prophet to the Roman authority as a disturber and a false Messiah. But it was necessary to arrange the terms of the accusation and distribute the roles, to get together and prepare the witnesses. *These measures were soon taken.* As soon as morning had come the priests brought their prisoner chained before the tribunal of Pontius Pilate,

as if the reconstruction of some documents from one's wholly imaginationary standpoint would save the historicity of the documents from which alone the history should, on the thesis, be gathered. So quoting the above passage, Mr. Robertson easily exposes its fallacy by remarking: " The reconstruction is so thoughtlessly managed that we get only a slightly less impossible account. " (H. J. p. 163). What could not be done at midnight is being hurried through from dawn to morning, but the reason of this inexplicable hurry remains quite in the dark

as ever. "The conducting of the trial immediately upon the arrest, *throughout the night*," says the same authority earlier in the book, "the very witnesses being "sought for" in the darkness, is plain fiction, explicable only by the dramatic obligation to continuous action." (p. 61.) And no one need now deny its dramatic character.

Still more inexplicable is the synoptic's allegation that the Sanhedrim attended the court of Pilate who, by the bye, is like Judas a late addition from the mystery drama—a man wholly mythical and therefore incompatible with his historical prototype, the Pilate of Josephus, a ruthless Roman to the backbone as far at least as the Jews were concerned. He was introduced simply to give a historical character to the myth. And as to the procedure before Pilate the less said the better. The whole thing is not only a huge farce but an example of an elaborate *ignoratio elenchi*. Dalman, Brandt, Loisy—all exegetes agree that Jesus' answer " Thou sayest " means " I am "—an unequivocal confession of guilt constituting a grave political offence. Yet Pilate is made to declare unto the chief priests and the multitudes—"I find no fault in this man." He proposed release but ordered execution ! To the modern Jew it amounts to a sacrilege that the priests requested the heathen governor to execute a Jew for pure ecclesiastical offence. Somehow to lead Jesus to the gallows constituted the motive of this elaborate tragedy. Crucifixion is what the gospellers aimed at, it was no matter to them how ill they served themselves. Otherwise with so scanty an evidence no case could be carried to a governor for capital punishment. The gospels betray ignorance to a degree of any judicial proceeding : Jesus is brought before Pilate and Pilate at once without any preliminaries, as is the wont in the law court, commenced questioning Jesus. The documents give us not a word as to what constituted the charge. But a preliminary is not really wanting and that is supplied by Matthew in his grand-motherly way : *Pilate's wife dreamt a dream* ! Yes, we are here overhead and ears in dreams and myths and not at all concerned with history. History is made of sterner stuff.

Gospellers' ignorance of Jewish customs.

Here it is worthwhile to enumerate some points found unjustifiable by Dr. Joseph Klausner, a very distinguished Hebrew scholar well acquainted with Jewish manners and customs and a staunch historicist into the bargain. He, in his *Jesus of Nazareth*, translated (1925) from original Hebrew, remarks—(i) on the night trial : "It is an impossible supposition that the Sanhedrim

An enlightened Jewish view on *inconsistencies*.

examined Jesus during the night of a Festival or (according to Luke) on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread" (p. 341); (ii) on Mark's report concerning the High Priest's question to Jesus: "the Son of the Blessed is not a Hebrew expression and must be a later addition, and on Matthew's report: "the oath is possible but the words "Son of God" (which becomes a separate question in Luke) from the mouth of a Jewish High Priest, and particularly from a Sadducee were inconceivable" (p. 342); (iii) on spitting in the face of Jesus and other inhumanities done to him in the court after he was pronounced guilty of blasphemy: "All of this would be impossible in the house of the High Priest and in the presence of the Sanhedrim" (p. 344); (iv) on Pilate's washing his hands of the blood of Jesus: "Washing the hands, as a sign that those hands are free of blood is a specifically Jewish custom used in the ceremony of "the heifer whose neck is broken", and how could a Roman official perform it?" (p. 347). No solution comes from the standpoint of historicity. It is a mythic element incorporated in the story. In this symbolical representation the gospeller substitutes Jesus for the Paschal victim unwittingly betraying the real character of the story. And who could play the part of the priest at this sacrifice more fittingly than this Roman official? (v) He further remarks on Pilate's liberation of a prisoner at every festival: "The right to free a criminal after condemnation belonged only to the Emperor, and it is, on the whole, most unlikely that in all his four books Josephus found no opportunity of mentioning such a noteworthy custom as that of liberating a prisoner before the Passover" (*Ib*). History is helpless but mythology comes to our rescue. The liberation of Jesus Barabbas is a historico-mythical necessity we discuss later on (Vide *infra* Chap. XXc). Pilate wanted to liberate "the King of the Jews", and Jesus-Barabbas festival symbolises the sacrifice of the King for the good of the nation. But a King was not forthcoming every year to be sacrificed. So the ceremony was reduced to the custom of releasing a condemned prisoner as a substitute of the King with the King's prerogative for a time as shown before (Vide *supra* Chap. XIV and other places). (vi) Clausner's pointed comment on the punishment is: "The Law enacted that the blasphemer, the false prophet, the beguiler and seducer were to be stoned". It was also held that "everybody that is stoned is also hanged", and all alike held that "the blasphemer who had been stoned was (after death by stoning) also hanged" (p. 344). As Pilate found "no fault in this man but handed him over to the Jews" he should have been stoned to death and hanged. Yet we are told that the gospels are a biography! But, who

knows it not that biographies belong to a quite different order of literature? Wellhausen once shrewdly but very boldly pronounced: "Jesus was not a Christian: he was a Jew" (Ib. p. 95). Then Jesus' must have been a Jewish trial. The gospellers tried to make it so but with their insufficient knowledge of the Jewish Law. Therefore we find Jesus a Jew thrust into the Procrustean Roman bed! Comparing this fact with the Trial account of the gospels the conclusion is inevitably forced upon the mind of the critical reader that Christianity was fabricated independently of any historical person. The concrete personality was thrust into it only for some dramatic effect.

Myth and not history.

Dr. Gardner has pointed out a cause of the difficulty. Of course, his is a historicist's standpoint. According to him the early disciples could not discriminate "between what they gathered from the tablets of memory and what they saw with inward vision. The past and the present, dreams, revelations and outward events were" the Doctor observes "all inextricably mingled in their mind" (*Exploratio Evangelica*, p. 157). No history can be gathered from there. And yet there was an authentic history. It is a known fact about the sect-conflicts of early Christianity that an anti-Jewish tendency was getting the upperhand among the Gentile Christians who necessarily guarded against the resentment of Rome and therefore concocted the priestly trial. The Judaizers, on the contrary, invented the Roman execution. But we find the Jewish trial as impossible as the Roman one. For doctrinal purposes the confession that Jesus is "the King of the Jews" must be retained, but to be on the safe side with the Roman Government no blame is laid at the door of Pilate. And all these were fused into an amalgam landing the story on contradictions and absurdities beyond redemption. But the question is: if resurrection *after* and trial *before* could be invented why not the crucifixion * in the meantime?

Duration of Ministry and date of Crucifixion.

* The date of crucifixion is also an enigma with which is bound up the question of the duration of the Ministry. According to Mr. Wright no body knows whether it lasted one, two, three (commonly accepted theory. According to Robertson "whole teaching career ostensibly covers but a year in the synoptic record"), four, ten or twenty years. To give a plausibility to a certain date Luke's story of the census was invented. But Wright, against Sir William Ramsay, rejects it as late accretions. Yet he fights for historicity and that without the pivot of the whole historic problem,—I mean, the duration of the Ministry and the date of Crucifixion.

Denial by Peter an interpolation.

As in the Trial so in the Denial the hall-mark of conflicting tendencies is too apparent to ignore. The *apostle*, the first of the fictitious twelve, denied *Him* who made him the 'rock' on which to found the kingdom of heaven. Was not the way prepared by a prediction of Jesus? The uncultured early Christians built their castle on the airy nothing of miracles and, as the outcome, the building has now fallen to the ground like a house of cards at the first blow of scientific criticism. But this is the fate of myth-making interpolators in general. Válmiki ended his epic with the coronation of Sree Ráma. Some one took it into his head to prolong the story. He conceived the exile of Sitá to be his peg on which to hinge the development of the plot. He interpolated the episode of Sitá's fire-ordeal, derogatory to the character and dignity of Sree Ráma and Sitá Devi alike. But myth-makers are everywhere non-chalant. Is it not detestable to think that the cowardly Peter would without demur assume the reins of the Church, as we find in the *Acts*, so much so that he was allowed to so mercilessly judge Ananias and punish him with miraculous death for a weakness infinitely less odious than his own ? How could he remain the pillar of the church, as described, after the circulation of the Denial story among the faithful and its ultimate acceptance by them ? Were not both the parties psychologically human beings ? How to reconcile the notorious 'rock' text,—*Matthew's* "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven", with "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" ? But both these passages are absent from Luke. The omission from there indicates that they are late additions—one eliciting the other as a retort. Which is first, nobody knows for certain. Perhaps the Denial story was the latest anti-Petrine invention when the Judaising and Gentilising controversy rose to its red-hot point. However, "even the figure of Peter" says Robertson in *Jesus Problem* (p. 218) "as the bearer of the keys, head of the twelve, and denier of the Lord, connects curiously with the myths of Proteus and Janus Bifrons, both bearers of the cosmic keys" (see C. M. also). Yet this Denial episode is not devoid of its comical aspect also. In the capture scene, it was Peter who cut off the ear of the Priest's servant with his sword, already got ready by the advice of Jesus (S. p. 36 *f. n.*) and it was Peter among the latter's companions who had the brazenfaced impudence to say before this very Priest's party that he did not know Jesus.

CHAPTER. XVII.

Crucifixion and Resurrection.

The gospel narrative of the Crucifixion has a special interest of its own. Because, here the myth-makers have left no stone unturned to make the theme a store-house of ancient mythological lore of all denominations. As to the Crucifixion scene itself, we have already referred to many items of it, here and there, as motived by Old Testament prophecies. But the real difficulty of the biographical school lies in the fact that in such a crucial point the reporters disagree. When one narration differs from another in such a momentous matter, neither can be accepted as biographical, or construed as a first hand report. The evangelists hopelessly contradict one another as regards the place of the appearance of the risen Christ as also regarding the nature of the resurrected body, i.e., whether it was natural or supernatural. When the so-called gospels contradict in regard to these events—events on which the whole superstructure is based, what faith can be put on them as historical records ? (vide Pr. Ch. vol. I., p. 2). If the devoted onlooker could not faithfully report the truth of such a supreme importance, it is because there was no truth to report. *Luke* puts the following to Jesus' mouth on the cross : "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That no other gospel records this is a sufficient proofs of its non-historical character. Now the revised version of the Bible ratifies this verdict. It is an interpolation and therefore not found in the oldest manuscripts, they say. We have already commented on this subject (vide supra pp. 61 and 223). One other utterance "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," has been copied *verbally* from the Psalm 31[5] : "O Lord, into thine hand I commit my spirit." John tells us that Mary Magdalene first saw the risen Christ. There is an Old Testament myth-motive entombed in it. The Jewish tradition says : "A maid servant on the road of the Red sea saw that which was not seen by Ezekiel or any of the prophets" (*The Song of Moses* as quoted by Edwin A. Abbot in *Fourfold Gospel*, p. 597). There are many other minor incidents which one gospeller mentions but the other omits. This is accountable from the mythical stand-point only. All are not adepts to the same extent in myth-making, and the motives could not be the same with all. All cannot be expected to be acquainted with all the aspects of the theme. One emphasises the doctrinal side, a second perhaps the mythical or the prophetic aspect; one emphasises the astral myth, another a ritual. Take the simple fact of offering

Myth-motives in the drink-offer on the cross.

drink to Jesus on the cross and see what a mess the evangelists, ostensibly actuated by different motives, have made of this insignificant item of detail. I cull the following from *Jesus Problem*, p. 58 :

> In the first two gospels, a drink is offered to Jesus on the cross—wine mingled with gall, in Matthew; wine mingled with myrrh, in Mark—"but he received it not" ; this, in Matthew, after tasting. The Marcan form is probably the first, as it describes the customary narcotic : the idea is to indicate that in the case of the divine victim no artifice was needed to secure an apparent acquiescence ; he was a voluntary sufferer. "Gall" in Matthew, may have reference to pagan mysteries in which a drink of gall figured. In Luke, vinegar is ostensibly offered as part of the derision. [O. T. motive in Ps. 69[21]). In John, no drink is mentioned till the end, when the dying victim says : "I thirst" (O. T. motive: "My tongue cleaveth to my jaw," Ps. xxii). Having partaken of "a sponge full of vinegar upon hyssop", he says, "It is finished" and dies. In Matthew, the act of compassion takes a simple form, the sponge of vinegar being given on the utterance of the despairing cry, while other bystanders jeer : in Mark, the giver of the sponge also jeers. *Gall* is an interpolation as many versions read *wine*.

But why is this scramble for a small detail of no serious import when there are wide discrepancies in broad points of great historical value ? There is no answer from the biographical stand point. The solution is mythical. This small detail has only a symbolical significance. When one gospeller makes Jesus reject the offer, he is thinking of the symbol that the Divine victim must be a willing sacrifice and he offers the drink before crucifixion. If John finishes by accepting the offer and that after crucifixion, it is because he is thinking that the Divine victim is preeminently a sufferer and in his opinion *this* makes the cup of suffering full to the brim. And the *jeering* has been introduced because this was a feature of the mockking crucifixion of the time, or, it is serving the doctrinal purpose of provoking sympathy and enabling the sypathiser to be in heaven with Christ. *Leg-breaking* has a history of its own. It was resorted to for the purpose of demonstrating the submissive mood of the victim. (P. C., p. 153). Its prohibition, by the Old Testament, in the case of the Paschal sacrifice reminds one of an earlier sanction. Though others are quite silent over it, the writer of *John's* gospel, remembering that leg-breaking occurred in some circumstances, meant to incorporate

Leg-breaking ceremonial.

the idea but stumbled at the prohibition : "A bone of him shall not be broken." So he passed it on to the other two victims, thereby killing the snake without breaking the stick, as the Bengali adage has it. However their disagreement being thus complete and their testimony as historical evidence being thus found wholly unacceptable, on what data, then, should the evangelists be taken to have proceeded? Only clue to their procedure can be found in the known ritual of a crucified saviour-God who, like other saviour-Gods such as Attis, Adonis etc., appeared to suffer as a willing victim. The different narratives testify to the existence of a *ritual* or *rituals* of crucifxion or quasi-crucifixion, in variants of which there had figured the two procedures of breaking the legs of the victim and giving him a narcotic. "Of these procedures" with irresistible force concludes Mr. Robertson who is *par excellence* qualified to speak on scientific hierology and mythology, "neither is understood by the evangelists" (P.C. p 121). All pretensions to the contrary notwithstanding, when this eminent mythologist, Mr. Robertson, speaks, every one must prick up his ear. Though on occasions Dr. Carpenter has been hauled over live coal by Mr. Robertson for the former's lapses (vide C.M. pp. 451-459), on this point we find them almost on the same bed. Says Dr. Carpenter in *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 270 :

> In the Johannine narrative Jesus ate no passover. He himself died at the time [the difference of date for the day of crucifixion between the synoptics and the Fourth gospel is the harmonist's despair, as it offirs them so much occasion for heart-searchings] when the lambs were being slain in the Temple. He was thus the true paschal sacrifice and was identified in that character by the writer's application of the ancient ritual precept (19[36]) "Not one of his bones shall be broken" (Zech. 12[10]). Yes, "the Gospel was thus a delineation of the true Christian Gnosis and its truth was not historical but ideal".

And not the Fourth Gospel alone is in that predicament. Considered on all counts the crucifixion scene is incomprehensible if taken biographically, but mythically it is transparent. So the historicists adopt make-shifts to evade the ugly situation, though in their heart of hearts they are not unaware of the peril. Thus by allying John's "I thirst" with Psalmist's "My soul thirsteth after thee" and then collating them with "Why hast thou forsaken me," Mr. Edwin A. Abbot observes palpitatingly: "John has helped us to apprehend what Jesus actually meant, comprehend we cannot. "Forsake" is only a metaphor. "Thirst" is only a metaphor. But the two together help us to apprehend more of the incomprehensible than we could have apprehended

from either record taken by itself" (*The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 601). Why incomprehensible ? Do they not all meet together to make the Old Testament motive as clear as daylight ? To wilfully set one's mind against understanding a thing in the right line is to play the role of the awakened sleeper. Gods even can not help in such a plight.

Crucifixion mythical in every item.

The scourging, the royal robe, the mock crown, the drink, the leg-breaking and the piercing with the spear are all mythical and ritual. The leg-bones were broken to indicate the willingness of the victim; and to make him insensible, a latter-day humane device—drugging or intoxication—was resorted to in Jerusalem even in the case of common criminals (vide *Talmud*). This practice is found in the Dravidian and African sacrifices and among the Khonds also. (vide *Pagan Christs*). Among the primitive Albanians the victim was pierced through the side by a sacred lance (Ibid). The offer of a crown symbolical of the solar orb is a characteristic of ritual sacrifice as well as the offer of flowers and even of thorns. Prometheus received a crown of osiers from Zeus. If it is argued that the crown was a common feature of the crucified, then the reply is that the two criminals with whom Jesus was crucified did not receive any crown. And this episode also has an Old Testament reference as 'he would be reckoned with transgressors' (*Lk*. 22 [37]). But the triple execution itself has a primordial ritual significance. It was a Persian practice. Saint Hitzibonzit was offered up as a sacrifice between two malefactors. The Egyptian usurper Inarus was crucified between two thieves. Then we see many Maries in the Crucifixion scene. But here the motive is supplied by the ritual liturgy where too many Maries mourn the victim. The issuing of "blood and water" is taken from the Old Testament (*Zech*. 12[10]). Because in those days people valued legends more than facts, therefore such an egregious falsehood that blood and water issued side by side from a dead body passed muster (S. p. 221). The writer knew that it had no basis in fact. So he swore that his "record is true" (*John* 19[35]). As a myth this is quite in keeping with John's mood of idealism who cared very little for external facts. The evangelist wanted to combine both baptism and last supper together in the body of Jesus and in that mood he could conscientiously swear that his record was true. "The garment without seam" we find in the Fourth gospel. The motive for this on the Hebraic side is that the high priest wears such a garment. On the pagan side Apollo in Sparta and Hêrê at Elis have this garment. Ahura Mazda has partless robe. On the astral side it symbolises the indivisible solar light originally ascribed to Osiris. From all this it is absolutely clear that "his death on the cross"

as Whittaker summrises, "is not described with accompaniments that were those of a Roman execution, but with the characteristic details of various rites of human sacrifice known in all parts of the world from India to Mexico ! To all of them a mystic significance is attributed".

In short, we find in the gospels myth, ritual, symbol and doctrine in abundance but never a fact of actual biography. The next item is another evidence in point. Jesus died and forthwith a "rock tomb" was supplied ! The reason is not far to seek. In Mithraism the rock tomb is an item in its ritual of death and resurrection. Otherwise there could be no reasonable motive to make this episode so prominent. And the resurrection ! This one item is sufficient to ruthlessly kill all the biographical pretensions. Why ? Because Osiris, Herakles, Dionysos, Attis, Adonis, Mithra—all died to rise again. A ritual of burial, mourning, resurrection and rejoicing was an outstanding common feature of all the most popular cults of the near east. Now, a word concerning the fable that has been abandoned by all except the crudest among the orthodox, i. e., of rising from the dead on the third day. Over and above what can be said on this point from *Isaiah* 53, *Jonah* 2[1], and *Hosea* 6[2], we have a parallel near at hand in Keonjhur of Orissa. The Rájáh had to kill a man at the time of installation which was afterwards reduced to a mock slaying, the mock victim disappearing for the time being. "He must not be seen for three days : then he presents himself to the Rájá as miraculously restored to life. (*Golden Bough*). On the other hand, it is quite easy to create and spread the stories of death and resurrection as from the columns of our dailies. The cases of Lenin and Enver Pasha and Sunyat Sen are in point. They were *killed* several times only to reappear at some psychological moment. Grant Allen says of the resurrection : "What was universally believed about all other and elder human gods, was specifically afresh in a newer case" i. e., Christianity (*Idea of God*, p. 398). In view of this it is rather amusing at the fag end of the first quarter of the 20th century to declare as Bishop Thomas. B. Strong of Ripon has been pleased to do that "through the death and resurrection of Christ man had become reconciled to God (*Religion*, *Philosophy and History*, p. 51.) It was sufficiently nauseating to hear something like this from Dr. Priestly a century or more ago, but to-day it is simply astounding ! The Bishop should be forth-with sent on a mission to the Zulus to preach his doctrine. Even the Zulus of to-day may not entertain him. The savages will

Rock tomb and resurrection.

Christian view of resurrection primitive.

naturally relish the other item of his faith—the sacrificial death already shown to be a relic of ancient cannibalism (S. p. 78). I make bold to say that no man, unless he is brought up in such a belief, ever appreciates it. It is really very ridiculous for a child of modern times with any pretension to philosophical reflection to hold that man's relation with God is not immediate and direct but it depends on the historical event of this or that man's death and resurrection. One may now reasonably despair of the emancipation of the human intellect from the shackles of theological bias. But, pray, what is the authenticity of the event on the historicity of which the fate of all humanity is said to hang ?

Biblical discrepancy about first re-appearance.

Mark (14[37] ffg.) quoting *Zech.* (13[7]) gives out through the mouth of Jesus himself that the scattered host should go to Galilee. Luke keeps them together waiting the Penticost at Jerusalem. "Not at Jerusalem but at Galilee," Pfleiderer demands, "have we to seek the facts which lie at the basis of the belief of the Christian community in the resurrection of Jesus" ? (Pr. Ch. vol. I, p. 6.) But this Galilee is ignored as in *John*, or disparaged as in *Luke* and altogether forgotten as by the *Epistles* (see *infra* Ch. xix) These records can not be accepted as based on history. Real origins of Christianity must be sought elsewhere and from a quite different view-point. However, if any special spiritual merit was to be sought from the resurrection as an historical event, Ram Mohun's query gives a quietus to it : Is not the fact of Elijah's not having died at all a more conclusive evidence of his superior nature than the resurrection of Christ after his death on the cross ? (The Work cited, p. 753). But there is a more serious problem involved in Bishop Strong's cogitations over the question. The Bishop wants to prove immortality from resurrection. This betrays an awfully low condition of orthodox Christian metaphysics. It is in no spirit of boastfulness that Mr. J. T. Sunderland of America has shown in the *Subodh Patriká* of Bombay that on a percentage of population Unitarians are intellectually twenty-eight times more than the average, but the Baptists are only two-fifths and the Roman Catholics between one quarter and one fifth (as quoted in the *Indian Massenger* 27-3-27). To go to prove immortality from re-

Resurrection and immortality.

surrection is to materialise the soul. It degenerates human nature. By substituting the *religion* of resurrection in the place of the *religion* of immortality Christianity has degraded humanity "a step backward for all Western Europe" as Grant Allen has remarked. I cordially invite

the Bishop and his ignorant host to come to India not to teach—they have played the role of a teacher too long to a loathsome extent, but to learn—now is their turn to learn—from India what real spiritual immortality can be irrespective of life and death.

The Bishop, though writing about history, is quite unaware of this simple fact that only because of this historical standpoint the early Fathers were embarrassed with what appears to him to be a brand new truth of human history and by which he tries so easily to solve so profound a human problem of all times. The solution is not so easy, considered either philosophically or historically. So, if the pious Father and the inheritor of the kingdom of God, in his impotent rage, exclaimed: "The devil thus has his Christs," we should bear with him patiently. Resurrection is not a new phenomenon ushered in with Jesus, *it is a common characteristic of all pre-Christian saviour-Gods.* It is a thousand pities that a man accepts a traditional faith uncritically, but in course of time, when he finds it logically untenable he forthwith goes out in search of a justification for it anyhow. He makes himself ridiculous ultimately trying to pacify the questioning of his heart simply by an intellectual legerdemain. Exactly such a tragical fate has overtaken the Bishop in this case. However,

Fathers admitted pre-Christian resurrection myths.

"The devil, whose business it is to pervert the truth", remarks Father Tertullian ("Hoer" Cap. XL), the violent polemical writer, "mimics the exact circumstances of the divine sacraments in the mysteries of idols. He himself baptises some—that is to say, his believer and followers. He promises forgiveness of sins from the sacred fount, and thus initiates them into the religion of Mithras. He marks on the fereheads his own soldiers. He then celebrates the Oblation of Bread [an unmistakable hint that the origin of the Lord's Supper lies not with Jesus but with the Mithra-cult ?] and introduces an image of the resurrection, and before a sword wreathes a crown."

Heigh ho ! the devil has spoiled the game. In his name the secret has been given out unawares that what is claimed to be the Christian speciality has only been bodily borrowed from some or other ancient cult—resurrection and all. The ancients, unlike the moderns, were not jealous of the primitive mysteries and ancient faiths. "The early Christian Fathers (Clemens of Alexandria, Irenœus etc., under the Gnostic and Alexandrian influence recognised partial manifestations of the Logos in Socrates and other heathen teachers, and even in unknown lands." (Seal's *Vaishnavism and Christianity*, p. 61). If the moderns are jealous they are so, because, having once lost sight of the original meaning, they are making a desperate effort to substitute history for a

myth. And in this respect the Christian endeavour is not without its parallel in our country. Our exegetes, the great Sáyana and S'ankara no exceptions, having lost sight of the primitive situation in which the Vedas were composed, have proposed absurdly fanciful interpretations of the Vedic hymns. (Vide Tilak's *Arctic Home* and *A'mâder Jyotishí O Jyotish* by Rai Bahadur Professor Jogesh Chandra Roy, Vidyaratna, M. A).

However, Justin Martyr, a man of philosophical temperament, unlike Tertullian, meekly submitted to the inevitable. Says he in a mood of friendly and apologetic remonstrance:

> If, then, we hold some opinions near of kin to the poets and philosophers in greatest repute amongst you, why are we unjustly hated? —By declaring the *Logos* the first begotten of God, our master Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin without any human mixture, and to be crucified and dead, and to have risen again and ascended into heaven, we say no more in this than what you say of those whom you style the Sons of Jove.

But these *Sons of Jove* are mostly astral figures, natural myths and symbolic names! At the time the name Christianity was imposed, presumably, on some ancient cult, symbolical and allegorical interpretations were largely resorted to. In Philo's *Every Virtuous Man Is Free*, we find the Therapeuts (has the term anything to do with the Buddhistic 'Thera'?)

> Read the sacred scriptures and seek after wisdom by allegorical exposition of the hereditary Philosophy, in as much as they regard what constitutes the letter of each utterance as the symbol of a nature that is withheld from sight, but revealed in the hidden meanings. They possess, besides, compositions of ancient men who were the founders of the school, and bequeathed many a memorial of the allegorical manner of which they avail themselves by way of arche-types, and so closely follow the method of the original school.

And the inability to be in touch with "the method of the original school" is the one most unfortunate factor which in all lands has led scholars to a wild-goose-chase of historicity. Otherwise, no historicity is required to suggest the idea of a suffering and dying saviour with the necessary resurrection to follow. The universally present sun and the moon, as they rose and set, as they coursed in their paths with varying intensity of brilliance, now shedding their lustre and then declining and disappearing only to appear again to cause rejoicing among men—all this together with nature's alternate waning and rejuvenation every year, opened the flood-gates of imagination of the ancient poets, and one such flight of imagination was expressed by the drama leading to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And the pagan Christs were many

Resurrection an astro-natural myth.

and varied. The world already possessed at least half a dozen of such nature-myths in diverse forms dramatised into a sacrificing divine Son and Saviour who died for his fellows and rose again from the tomb. And why search for it outside Judæa? The drama of Jesus "may have been simply a revival of an older ideal that Javeh was himself Tammuz dying every year, mourned by the women of Jerusalem according to Ezekiel 8^{13}, rising and dying again to enter once more into life". (*Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*, p. 232). Giving the reins to their imageries our Vedic Rishis saw in Night the mother of the Sun who, as they found, came out of her womb in the morning, but in the evening, as he disappeared under the cover of darkness as if to live with her, they changed the metaphor into a relation between husband and wife, and called the sun "मातुर्दिधिषुम्" (*Rik* 6-55-5). The idea may be thought to be too sacrilegious to pay much attention to and therefore be passed over as inexplicable. But considered in connection with this solar myth the idea is as clear as day-light. Now transfer your imagery to the starry heavens which never failed to stir the imagination of man especially in his infancy, you will find in the congeries of stars any figure of any shape, size and magnitude that pleases your fancy. In the part of the sky where *our* Rishis saw the spearing of the holy one—the *Yajna-purusha or Prajápati* (vide *A´mâder Jyotishi O Jyotish*), they of the west found "the figure of one who sealed his word on the cross." The group of stars called *Orion* is that part of the sky. The coincidence is a fit subject for historico-comparative research. In the astral mythology and other myth-stories Orion has played various parts in the west—Noah coming out of the ark (Argo); Phaëton sinking in the waters of the Eridanus, Jason in his Argo, Prometheus fastened crosswise to the rocks, Mithra fighting the bull, and the Egyptian Sun- and Moon-God Osiris with all his fables. In Orion the Indians have seen now a man or *asura*, now an antelope, then a fish and tortoise, or a bear and goat—thereby giving rise to a host of myths (*A´mâder Jyotishi O Jyotish*). In *Job* 38, Orion is a giant fastened to the heavens with chains. In *Ps.* 22, it is Orion that cries "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" for which see the following addendum.

Addendum: *Anent* Crucifixion

The Gnostic story of the Saviour still in the second century was astral in character. The Pharisees being believers in Fate formerly took kindly to astrological ideas. But after the destruction of Jerusalem they fell back upon the Law and they would have nothing but the Law. So they gradually fell away from the astral mythology. As the early Christian

Astral start of Christ story.

community originated mainly from the Gnostic sects, already pointed out, the new converts had necessarily to be initiated into the "mysteries" of the astral doctrine. This increased the struggle of the community with the Pharisees, an echo of which is found in Luke's gospel in the following words of Jesus to the scribes: "Woe unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge ; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered" (*Luke* 11[52]).

Details of Crucifixion scene drawn from Orion-myth in O. T.

Psalm 22, to which we have already referred on several occasions, figures very prominently in the crucifixion of Jesus. This psalm which supplies most of its details has hitherto been a puzzle to interpreters. This difficulty indicates the unavoidably tragic fate of historical research in a field where there is no history. Dr. Drews has grariingly laid bare the astral features of the passage which the fabricators of the gospel narrative made their base. So the mythical influence, especially the influence of the astral myth, on the crucifixion scene can not reasonably be disputed now. The text of the psalm, considered with an unbiassed mind, leaves no room for any other interpretation. There is absolutely no justification for rejecting this astral interp retation as many have done playfully. On the "world tree", the Milky way, hangs Orion with hands and feet stretched out forming a cross *. "I am poured out like water"—a clear reference to the river Eridanus that flows beneath the feet of Orion. But from the body of Jesus on the cross flew both blood and water—blood in keeping with the sacrificial myth and water to maitain the astral character. Yes, myths are multifocal (p. 293). "Dogs have compassed me" -the groups of Canis major and Canis minor are near at hand. "The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me,"—please look at the heavens and see the Bulls, the Dogs, the Hare, the Twins (Castor and Pollux called the Heavenly criminals, robbers) described as "wicked" in the astral myth. It was an enigma to the interpreters how the sufferer in the psalm was surrounded by so many animals of various types. The mystery is now solved. We can name many more if the psalm demands—such as lion, re'ēms etc. Jesus was killed along with two criminals—the two dogs or the twins will serve our purpose. Of the two criminals one was good, says the gospel. Curiously enough in the astral myth of Castor and Pollux, one is called "good" because of its relation with the summer. If the

* This is a variant of the myth we have already alluded to. It is a very common feature in the astral mythology that the same group gives many myths or many groups give the same myth. Our *Daksha-yajña* has astral as well as historico-astronomical interpretations.

good one was converted—that was, of course, to serve the gospeller's doctrinal purpose. (S. pp. 204, 223). The "sword" of the verse 20 also one finds in Orion. "All my bones are out of joint" of verse 14, or "I may tell all my bones" of v. 17 presents no difficulty to us. To the star-gazer the figure is a skeleton of disjointed bones indeed, it is the gazer's imaginaiion that will supply the flesh, and it is in Orion and Orion alone among the constellations we can so clearly point out all the limbs of the human body. In the Septuagint version we read: "They pierced my hand and feet." The arrow of Castor really pierces one hand ; and at one period of the year the Arrow (*Sagitta*) is in opposition to this—so it pierces both sides. Here we find the reason why the figure was changed from the "tree" to the "cross". "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture". Orion's robe is the heavens (in the Hindu conception also) which seem to be divided among different constellations. The "seamless robe" is the Milky Way or the sun's undivided light. Vide *Witnesses* (Appendix).

However, it is in the winter half of the ecliptic Orion seems to be distressed and with upturned arms cries: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." * And why should not the Twins from the highest point of the ecliptic at the time mock the sun? We see, both in the psalm and in the gospels, the "criminals" are derisive. But the sun crosses the equator and the whole scene assumes quite a changed aspect. This is resurrection. "The meek eat and is satisfied.' Here in this connection we should remember the metaphor about John the Baptist and Jesus the Christ (p. 256 f. n.). Now, when Orion plays the part of the crucified Saviour we easily find out who are the gospel Maries to weep at the cross and the mourning Maries of the liturgy. Pleiades (the "rain sisters"—our seven sisters *Krittikás*) and Berenice's Hair when rising above the eastern horizon will supply us all the materials. One of the sisters is called Maja (Maria, the mourning Pleiad. This is the common name of all Saviours' mothers. Cf. *Máyá*, Buddha's mother.) Pleiades are hairdressers (*Megaddela*). Electra, the name of the mother of Jasios (Gk. equivalent of Jesus) is supposed to be the centre of the Pleiades, represented as a mourner with a cloth over her head—just the model of the Christian Mary (*Witnesses*, p. 314). In the early Christian conception Jesus' mother is a dove (*peleias*, Pleiad). Of cours, the Pleiades are situated on the head of Orion and the Holy

* This verse and "they gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" have been bodily transferred from the psalm to the gospel.

Ghost * descended on the head of Jesus as a dove. One notices a cup or skull at the foot of the crucifix. Golgotha, "the place of skulls", where Jesus is said to have been crucified has never been verified by the topography of the gospels, but it is easily discovered in the sky. Niemojewski takes the constellation of the cup (*Gulguleth*—skull) to be the heavenly Golgotha. But Drews here in this connection refers to the skull of the Bull and the head of Medusa as they are situated in the region of the heavens where Orion is found. In this way is the remainder of the gospel story astrally interpreted. Those who look askance at the astral mythology should first study the constellations and see what account the ancients of all lands have had to render. I do not say that there are no difficulties. Different people of different times with differences in taste, temperament and knowlege can not be expected to interpret the same thing in the same way, as a great deal must depend on imagination. Owing to the precession of the equinoxes the whole view-point is changed. And the transference of the equinox from one constellation to the other has given rise to volumes of astral myths. As, for example, our Prajápati pursuing his daughter or, in the Greek mythology, the Hunter pursuing the Pleiades. *A'máder Jyotishi O Jyotish* will help the Bengali reader.

Ritual and myth.

All primitive rituals and religions were astral from which mythology primarily grew. First ritual, then myth—that is the verdict of Frazer. Our *Purva-mimánsá* holds the *mantras* (rituals) to be originals and the Devas mere accretions. Those who at the present moment lead the movement of abolishing the animal sacrifices retaining the respective *pujás* put the car before the horse. They should not forget that the *pujás* with their paraphernalia were invented in the interest of the sacrificial rituals and not *vice versa*. People do not usually observe a custom because on a particular occasion a mythical being is said to have acted in a certain way. But, on the contray, they very often invent myths to explain why they perform certain ceremonies. (*Golden Bough*). People do not observe *dole* or *hindole* because Krishna as a historical person indulged in them. No, the festivals are of earlier date. Frazer's dictum: "All peoples have invented myths to explain why they observed certain customs"—will help us in this connection. More so, because it is confirmed by Robertson Smith's conclusion: "In almost every case the myth was

* We have already pointed out (p 169) the Buddhistic ThreeGems (Triratna) to bo the prototype of the Christian Trinity and one of them the Holy Ghost (pp. 86,169) as a female. It is curious that in the Buddhistic tradition in Bengal (*Dharmapuja-paddhati* of Rámái Pandit, pp. 212-213) *Dharma* is taken to be a female.

derived from the ritual and not the ritual from the myth" (*The Religion of the Semites*, p. 18). There is absolutely no doubt that there was a cult of "the crucified" before the Christian era The Jesus of the *Didaché* and *Revelation* is earlier than that of the gospels. So, Christianity had its nucleus undoubtedly in the astral myths. If, according to Professor Rudolf Roth, the reputed German author of the epoch-making book, *On the Literature and History of the Veda* (Zur Literatur und Geschichte des Veda), "the entire series of the principal divinities of the Veda belongs to the domain of natural symbolism", what is the harm that the Bible be based on a series of myths, astral or otherwise? That people have understood (misunderstood ?) it in a different sense from a long time is no argument against this sound view of comparative mythology. Is not mythology broadbased on such misunderstandings ? So we should not be detained by such objections. All new things are objected to by those who are loath to unlearn the old. They would somehow manage to move in the old grooves. The world cannot forget what a commotion was created among the theologians and their partisans by Bryant's innocent book, *An Analysis of Ancient Mythology* propounding the theory that the myths of antiquity were but distorted echoes of the primitive tradition recorded in the Old Testament. But that is ancient history for to-day's comparative mythology. The present generation will derive only a museum amusement from Gladstone's *Studies on Homer* resolving Zeus, Apollo, and Athena into three persons of the Christian Trinity. However, a reference to Tilak's *Arctic Home* will show how longstanding interpretations of the Vedic hymns, even those of Sáyana and Pánini, have been recently set at naught, in some cases at least, without any hope of restoration. A myth, in the opinion of Dr. A. H. Sayce, a no mean authority on the subject, can not arise unless the true meaning of a word or phrase has been lost sight of, or its signification has undergone a change in the course of centuries, and a false meaning or explanation been attached to it. And it is more often than not due to a simple blunder. Here I can not resist the temptation to refer the reader to Rájarshi Rámmohun's three *Appeals* to verify how simple blunders about words or phrases have given rise to the major portion of the Christ-myth (vide *infra* Chap. xviii a). It is said that three fourths of our language are worn out metaphors and mythology originated in the metaphors interpreted literally. "The phenomena of nature were explained", observes Sayce in his *Science of Language* (vol. 1. p. 183), "by likening them to those human actions with

Mythology mostly based on misunderstanding.

which the primitive man was acquainted, and when in course of time a higher level of knowledge had been reached, and the original meaning of the traditional epithets had been forgotten, they came to be taken literally and interpreted as referring to beings of a superhuman world." So nothing stands in our way to concur with the same authority that "myths, for the most part, embody the fossilised knowledge and ideas of a previous era forgotten and misinterpreted by those that have inherited them." (Ibid, vol. II. p. 249). Moreover, "the idea", Dr. Seal informs us, "that myths are 'faded metaphors' and due to misunderstandings of archaic language and habits of speech, is to be found in Kumárila as also incidentally in Yáska, and rather fully in Bacon's Wisdom of the Ancients) and it is thus that Kumárila repels the Buddhist attack on Prajápati's conduct towards Sarasvati, and Indra's towards Ahalyá." (V. and Ch. p. 84) It has been shown almost to a demonstration that the story of *Vritra* and *Indra* is broadbased on an astronomical legend. If such a fine epic of the grandeur of Hemchandra's *Vritra-Samhár* could develop from such a slight foundation, what earthly reason there can be to urge against the view that the gospel narrative grew out of an astral root, other myths freely contributing to it. Myths are truly said to be multifocal. Once the ball is set rolling cult-making myths and legends from all directions will gravitate towards it as it proceeds. Says Mr. Robertson (P. C. p. 52) :

Christianity an amalgam of myths.

> Myths so called can be seen, on a fair induction, to have originated in a dozen different modes of natural fallacy—inference from phenomena, misinterpretation of names and objects of art, constructions from analogy, misinterpretation of ritual, conjunctions of worships and so forth.

The same authority observes in another connection (*G. M.* p. 34) :

> The whole line of Dr. Frazer's investigation leads up, though unavowedly, to the recognition of the crucified Jesus as the annually slain Vegetation-God on the Sacred Tree. But Jesus is buried in a rock-tomb, as is Mithra, the rock-born Sun-God ; and it is as Sun-God that he is born at the winter solstice ; it is as Sun-God (though also as carrying over the administrative machinery of the Jewish Patriarch) that he is surrounded by Twelve Disciples ; it is as Sun-God that, like Osiris, he is to judge men after death—a thing not done by Adonis ; it is as Sun-God passing through the Zodiac that he is represented successively in art and lore by the Lamb and Fishes ; and it is as Sun-God that he enters Jerusalem before his death on *two* asses—the ass and foal of one of the Greek signs of Cancer (the

turning point in the sun's course), on which Dionysos also rides. The Christ cult, in short, was a synthesis of the two most popular Pagan myth-motives, with some Judaic elements as nucleus and some explicit ethical teaching superadded.

Of the two prominent myth conceptions of old in all lands, Egypt and India included, one is Sun-God, and the other is Vegetation-God—the two most universal myth-stuff near at hand everywhere in all ages—one gradually but imperceptibly uniting with the other. This is generally the invariable fate of myths. Mithra, predominantly associated with the Sun, was naturally born on December 25, the winter solstice. So also Dionysos and Adonis, though primarily Vegetation-Gods. They were all ultimately cast into the all-compounding melting pot, the Christ-myth.

Conclusion.

The Messianic call is : "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." This necessarily draws under the banner large numbers who groan under a foreign tyranny and believe in the coming of the Messiah. But his miserable death sends them furiously to think : "But we trusted that it was he who was to have redeemed Israel" (*Lk.* 24[21]). The death by crucifixion sets a seal on Jesus' claim to be a Messiah. The Messiah can not die so ignominious a death. "A crucified Messiah" is a contradiction in terms, for "a curse of God is that which is hanged" (*Deut.* 21[23]). Schweitzer says : "In the charge to the Twelve the question is *only* about the eschatological—not about the ethical nearness of the Kingdom" (*The Mystry of the Kingdom of God,* p. 92) The story of the Resurrection is therefore necessarily invented as the stop-gap for this obvious failure of the Messianic mission because of the accursed death. This virtually does away with the eschatology in which the primitive Christian community lived, moved and had their being. But this resurrection myth is, in its turn, countered by the failure of the prediction : "Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom" (*Mt.* 16[28] ; *Mk.* 9[1] ; *Lk.* 9[27]). By far *the most tragic event in the whole history of Christianity is the retention of this prediction in the gospels.* Vide *supra* pp. 240-241.

Reason for resurrection legend.

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Part III.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRE-CHRISTIAN MODELS OF CHRIST

Prognosis

From conclusive evidences, both internal and external, it has been proved beyond the least shadow of a doubt that the Hebrew Commonwealth like the Hindu Society has never been statical (*Sanátana*) as is generally assumed by uninformed critics. No community of human beings can remain fundamentally of the same type all along. That they departed not by hair's-breadth from the path chalked out for them 'since Adam ploughed and Eve delved'. ("रेखामात्रमपि क्षुण्णादामनो वर्त्मनः परम्" can not with truth and propriety be said of them. It can be safely asserted of the apes only that they are swinging from tree to tree in the self-same manner for milleniums together. Unalterability is the characteristic of the brood of Hanu and not of the offspring of Manu.

Modern thought foisted on ancient Scriptures.

The Jewish theocratic code ascribed to Moses, the supposed earliest law-giver, was brought into existence not by any so-called divine revelation, but by the ordinary natural evolutionary process. In time the comparatively indeterminate primordial state of things developed into a full grown theocracy which was thrown back on the law-giver. In our country every redactor added something of his own to the original nucleus of a S'ástra which thus gathered round it new matter from every copyist and grew in volume, adding to itself strata after starta according to the needs of the time. But the original was scarcely, if ever, lost. Here is an example from the Rámáyana. Some one took it into his head that early marriage should be justified from that great epic. So in one of its recensions Sitá is made to inform Rávana that at the time she met the Rákshasa King she was 18 years of age and had left Ayodhyá for the forest after enjoying 12 years of her married life. So a good case is made out for early marriage. But the interpolator was quite unaware that one day he would be caught in his own trap. It did not occur to him that Sitá did not meet Rávana just entering the forest. At least 12 years elapsed between Ràma's exile and Sitá's abduction. So the man out-heroded himself. Sitá was then married 6 years before and not after her birth! Early marriage with vengeance! The interpolator is thus hoisted with his own petard. "Though honoured with the names of particular sages or even of God Himself in some cases as authors or the author," observes Dr. Bhágabat Kumár Shástri, M. A,

in "*The Bhakti Cult in Ancient India*, p. 95, "they [Sástras] provided full liberty and ample scope for subsequent transformations, additions or alterations". About the *Bhágavata* he notices numerous redactions through which the story passed before the work attained completion. "Even the complete original work underwent several modifications" (p. 97), he says. Similar things happened with the Jews also. The Hebrew literature too retains to this day the original portions embedded as fragments with a new structure around them. When imagination has its full scope the venerable past is delineated by the reverent present in the light of the highest truths that have been revealed in the writer's generation. The redactors threw back the theocracy, their newest ideal, into the past, and by way of edification attributed all the woes and sorrows of the race to their deviation from the divine plan thus ingeniously foisted on the fountain-head. " The writer of the book of Chronicles, believing," observes Dr. Carpenter, "in the antiquity of the religious institutions of his own day, carried them back to the pious Kings of ancient time, and drew a picture of David and Asa and Hezekiah, which expressed to his thought the traditional repute of these princes, much in the same way as later English story delighted to delineate the heroic forms of Arthur and Alfred " (*The F. Th. Gospels, p. 49*). Exactly this happened in the case of the New Testament also. If we adequately sift the materials and analyse the then circumstances without prejudice and prepossession " we shall find the teaching ascribed to the founder of the new religion and his apostles," Whittaker remarks, " to be a result of gradual growth thrown back in imagination to the beginning, like the ideal of the ancient theocracy" (O. C. p. 6). This exegetical theory, historically corroborated as it is, explains Christ by the spiritual consciousness of Christendom, instead of, as it is commonly done unhistorically, explaining Christianity by Christ. Following the same line of reasoning Dr. Carpenter has thrown St. John to the wolves, because "a similar process has been at work along other lines in the Fourth Gospel" About the other three the same verdict tardily comes with certain reservations of dubious import (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 59). What was wanting in facts could be made good by "pious imagination." But wicked people call it "pious fraud" ! However, the theological liberals are out to show that there was some historical person, Jesus, actually preaching some ethical doctrines to 'the multitude'. But there is not the slightest evidence for the existence of any early Christianity that was

N. T. no exception.

Christ a construction from Christian experiences fashioned after old models.

simply a moral rule of life divested of the miraculous birth and resurrection and the accompanying mysteries. Now the orthodox, quite bewildered at these stupendous discoveries by historical criticism, have thrown themselves into the lap of those protestant liberals, who were the bitterest of their erstwhile enemies. They called Rám Mohun names for doing this much, but now they have made common cause with the theologians to save something of Christ from this universal deluge, however little that something happens to be. The orthodox clergy is quite happy to-day to lead one to his baptismal font for believing in an *historical* Jesus—more is not wanted of him—it will do if Jesus was a good man. The plea of the God-man living and moving among men has been altogether abandoned. The Christian consciousness has made it a virtue of necessity to become satisfied with the fact that Jesus was born a man. It now-a-days feels scandalised even by the fact of 'born of woman'. But the verdict of critical history is, no matter whether a good man or a God-man, the Christ was fashioned after models that came handy to the compilers of the gospels. The generalised ideas of official Judaism, the fervid hope of a Messiah, Hellenistic myth and ritual, ethical and metaphysical ideas that had already passed into currency by the meeting of the East and the West in Alexandria, also the idea of personal salvation in a future life—all were ready there to be assimilated into the person of a slain and suffering God made familiar by the mystic cults of Adonis and Dionysos, Attis and Osiris, or those of the sorrowing mother of Gods,—Isis or Cybele. By comparing the salient features of the life of the gospel Jesus with the Servant of Yahweh in *Isaiah* and the 'Just Man' in the *Wisdom* it will not be a difficult task to show that the new religion that imposed itself in the Roman Empire, at least, in that section of it who found the path of Philosophy arduous, had nothing new in it. Nothing new even in the person that is placed at the head of it ! Let us justify our conclusion.

a. Hezekiah and David.

About the legend of parthenogenetic conception by Mary, Matthew has the following : Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, etc. On this Rájá Rámmohun Roy comments: The Evangelist Matthew referred in his Gospel to *Isaiah*, 7[11], merely for the purpose of accommodation; the Son of Ahaz and the Saviour resembling each other, in each being the means, at different periods though in different

senses, of establishing the throne of the house of David." (Work cited p. 651). We, in the Preamble, noticed this verse at some length and quoted Rámmohun's opinion (vide *supra*. p. 14) that the Prophet here had Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, in his mind. This and similar passages are being misquoted, misunderstood, misinterpreted and mistranslated from before and since the time of the evangelists till to-day as has been proved to the hilt by this "unrivalled" Biblical scholar, Rájá Rámmohun Roy in his *Appeals*. He has shown that Jonathan and other celebrated Jewish writers, some of whom lived prior to the birth of Jesus, referred these passages to Hezekiah. All these references were made to contemporary events. They, in those unscientific days of ignorance, superstition and miracle-mongering, might believe or be persuaded by others to believe that such specific predictions were possible about events to take place five hundred years afterwards. But no man of to-day in his senses can put any faith in these fables. When Jesus' prediction of such a near event as the fall of Jerusalem has been wholly discredited as *omne vaticinium post eventum*, sayings incorporated in *Hosea*, *Zechariah*, *Psalms*, or *Isaiah* to be construed as prophecies about Jesus are impossible far cries. Much is made of Savonarola's alleged prediction, made in 1496, about the sack of Rome which actually took place *in 1527*, or of Burke's prediction that the French Revolution would end in a tyranny (H. J., p. 84). But the unreliability of Savonarola's vaticinations as actual facts of his life has been established beyond cavil (vide *Hibbert Journal*, pp. 83-92), and the conclusions of Burke, and of several French writers who forecasted the revolt of the American colonies, are mere general inferences forming quite a different group of predictive sayings wide apart from these misconstrued Old Testament utterances. The latter are actually records of contemporary events misapplied by the evangelists and misinterpreted by the trinitarian exegetes. The matter considered logically turns out to be this :— That a man was born of a virgin cannot possibly be said of an historical person. Such a record should be thought a plain forgery and can be applied only to a legendary person, and actually a dozen of such persons are in evidence. It came to pass in this way. When Jesus was brought to the public view as the promised Messiah, the gospellers, of necessity and as a matter of expediency, sought their models in the old Testament as well as in the precedents of the Jewish sacred history. Because of their ignorance of the learned exegesis of

Actual events mistakenly turned into prophecies about Jesus.

Predictions of Savonarola and Burke.

the Old Testament, they adopted these passages and adapted them—accommodated them as the Rájá would euphemistically call it—to this purpose. They were, perhaps, quite unaware that the texts were wrongly ascribed to their hero. The tradition has come down that these passages embody prophetic utterances. As the Christian tradition was wholly cut off from the parent tree, this misappropriation could not be rectified or even seriously challenged. Purification in the tradional line began with the great Rájá. He has conclusively proved that the Old Testament passages, which the trinitarian divines have all along taken as prophetic of Jesus, embody references to sayings and doings of men of antiquity, real or imaginary, and therefore wholly mythical as far as Jesus is concerned.

Virgin birth.

We have already spoken of the legend of the virgin birth. Matthew has sent Jesus to Egypt because: "Out of Egypt have I called my son" (v. 2[15]). This is no prophecy. It was in remembrance of a past event. So saith the Lord: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt" (*Hosea*, 11[1]). Israel was taken to be the "Son of God" in olden times. The idea was not reserved to be realised on any future occasion. The evangelists have very cleverly utilised the builders' rejected stone as recorded in the scripture for *their* purpose of building. We read in *Matthew* 21[42] as Jeaus' saying: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner, this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes" (See *Mark* 12[10] and *Luke* 20[17] also). This is an unnecessary duplication of king David. Sings the psalmist: "I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes" (*Ps.* 118[22-23]). For the artist such an exact model is rarely found. Then says Jesus unto them: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (*Matt.* 26[31]). The above is (mis) quoted in the gospel to create this false impression on the audience that it was a prediction to be realised on any future occasion and about to be realised by Jesus. But, unfortunately, it was an accomplished fact long ago. It was originally applied to Agrippa, the last King of the Jews whose subjects were scattered after he had been struck hard. It is recorded in *Zechariah* 13[7]: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is

Calling from Egypt a past event.

Israel the Son of God.

Agrippa the stricken shepherd.

my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

The Judas story has been rejected as wholly untrustworthy (see *S. p.* 280). But the evangelists could not resist the temptation of making a good use of such a scriptural text. They had no time to consider whether it was misplaced or misused, because they had somehow to fabricate a story based on the so-called prophecies. It is said of Ahithophel, David's friend, who betrayed him: "Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, lifted up his heel against me" (*Ps.* 41⁹). Again, David speaks of his enemies: "They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred and fought against me without a cause." (*Ps.* 109²³). The evangelists have visualised the scene by introducting a conspiracy of the Pharisees against Jesus and putting the words of David into the mouth of Jesus in the following condensed form: "They hated me without a cause" (*John* 15²⁵).

David betrayed and hated.

Now we shall end with Hezekiah as we began. Here is a passage that covers in a nutshell the whole life of Jesus both *pre mortem and post mortem*,. But the facts indicated by the passage were already realised in the chequered life of Hezekiah, i. e., "*God my Strength*". To apply it to Jesus is to simply ratify our verdict as to the mythical character of Jesus' life-story. The passage is this: "For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called wonderful, counseller, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, ever for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (*Isaiah* 9⁶⁻⁷). The Rájá challenges all Christian scholars to show any authority that applies this passage to Jesus even in an accommodated sense as "a great many learned Trinitarians in their mere enthusiasm do." As evidenced from his Second and Final *Appeals*, he has ransacked the whole of the Old Testament, especially *Isaiah*, 2 *Kings*, 2 *Chronicles*, as far as only this question is concerned, and shown that all the so-called prophecies of *Isaiah* were already fulfilled in the reign of Hezekiah as described in *Kings* and *Chronicles*; of course, "making allowance for the hyperbolical style of Eastern nations". Those who know that the prophetic

So-called prophecies, as detailed, already fulfilled in Hezekiah before misapplied to Jesus.

books were revised and redacted at a much later date and then thrown backward upon the past, as we have shown above, will be able to rate their prophetic merit at their proper value. However, *Isaiah* 9^{2-3} in which passage a great joy at the delivery from the hands of invaders is predicted may be referred to 2 *Chron.* 30^{26} where that joy is described—"there was not the like in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon". The verse 4 throws off the yoke of the oppressor and 2 *Kings* 18^{7} describes how Hezekiah rebelled against the King of Assyria. Verse 5 foretells the destruction of the invading hosts, and 2 *Kings* 19^{35} and 2 *Chron.* 32^{21} tell us how the Assyrian army was slewn. And then it is described in details how the illustrious son, as depicted in the verses 6 and 7 already quoted, found favour with God in the person of Hezekiah. Then Rámmohun concludes :—

> The public may now judge whether or not the above circumstances determine the application of the verses 6 and 7 to Hezekiah who "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord" ; "removed high places" ; "broke the images and cut down the groves" ; "trusted in the Lord God of Israel" ; "clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him" ; "with whom the Lord was" ; who "prospered whithersoever he went" ; and prior and subsequent to whose reign "was none like him among all the Kings of Judah." And they may also decide whether the delivery of Israel from the attack of the Assyrians and the punishment inflicted on the Kings of Assyria in the prescribed manner, took place in the reign of Hezekiah, or that of Jesus Christ (p. 773-774).

And these are the materials of which the Christ-figure was made and these the props by which the edifice has been sustained throughout the ages. Yes, man's credulity knows no bounds !

b. *Isaiah's* Servant of God

A Hindu Professor is said to have sometime ago delivered himself thus before a body of Indian students : "There has been no other such character in human history as Jesus Christ. He is the greatest character that has ever appeared in human life." On the strength of the above quotation the Centenary Forward Movement of Calcutta has advertised (*Modern Review* for March, 1923) that "this matchless and divine life [the Professor says "human life." I know of no logic, it must be some magic—by which a 'human life' being matchless at once turns into a "divine life] is portrayed in the New Testament," which we have been so kindly invited to read, Following the advice

of the Movement we have not only read it, but gone a step further, we have compared it with the Old and, as the result thereof, come to the conclusion that this 'divine life,' if any, the gospel Jesus owes not to himself but to Isaiah of the Prophetic fame. And we undertake to prove it. But, as the proof of the pudding is in the eating, let us forthwith proceed to reconstruct the life of Jesus from the pre-Christian Old Testament instead of waiting till the post-Christian second century when the New Testament was compiled. Jesus began his *divine* career after the Holy Ghost descended upon him. And we read of Isaiah's Servant (11[2]): "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord". No reader of the New Testament need be told why this preparation was necessary for the Saviour—necessary because he was to sit in judgment. Jesus is made wise and full of tenderness for the oppressed and the suffering. He is meek and obedient to God even unto death. He patiently submits to his lot, not at all troubled about the foulest maltreatment and shame heaped on his devoted head. He would rather pray for his torturers. Nothing daunted he goes forth to preach the truth committed to his charge. How beautifully this is depicted in the following passages of *Isaiah* : "Behold my servant whom I uphold ; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth ; I have put my spirit upon him ; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he no quench ; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth ; and the isles shall wait for his law" (*Isaiah*, Ch. 42). Put 'son' for 'servant' and the passage looks as if bodily transferred to the New Testament for the delineation of the character of Jesus,—human on divine, we need not quarrel over that. Again we read : "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.......The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded ; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

Descent of Holy Ghost.

Jesus' moral qualities transferred from the "Servant".

(Ch. 1[4]). This picture, call it 'divine' if you please, is more life-like than any we find in the New Testament. And the reason is not far to seek. The writer of *Isaiah* is evidently far more cultured and spiritually far more advanced than the evangelists, if the latter are taken literally. Vide *Infra* Chap. xx d.

Friend of the poor.

And Jesus is Christ, i. e., God's anointed and a friend of the poor and the down-trodden—a bit Bolshevic, perhaps. The model is exact as is evident from the following extracts. "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the *meek*; he hath sent me to bind up the *broken-hearted*, to proclaim *liberty to the captives*; to comfort *all that mourn*" (*Is.* Ch. 61). "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (29[18]). "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof, for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces and grind the faces of the poor?" (3[14]). This is Bolshevism, pure and simple. And the Old Testament is justified in view of the New Testament strictures on the rich. It is a psychologically verifiable fact that the weary and the heavy-laden who naturally feel aggrieved from an oppressive rule universally pitch their hope on and seek salvation in the changed order of things. Look at the Indian affairs to-day.

Lover of children.

Is not Jesus a lover and admirer of children as "of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Yes, the Psalmist led the way: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained praise" (8[2]), and the Talmud followed suit: "About the Messiah will all gather who seek in the Law, especially the *little ones** of the world".

Speaking in parables.

Parables deal with the kingdom of God, especially how it will spread, what preparations should be made to be worthy of it and what attitude the Jews and the Gentiles respectively take towards it. So the reason why Jesus is made to speak in parables is to be sought in *Isaiah*, not only in regard to their subject matter which need not be again dwelt upon, but also in regard to the necessity of this mode of preaching (*Mark* 4[12]) i. e., the necessity of throwing the multitude off scent, as the evangelist informs us. We read in *Isaiah*: "With

* The alternative meaning of the term will be found elsewhere. See S p. 52.

stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (28[11]). The Prophet is commanded by Yahweh to "go and tell this people: Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (6[9-10])

Reason of Jesus' mode of preaching too.

Dr. Drews in his *Christ-Myth* has, from the tradition of Judaism, shown that the idea of a suffering and dying God was quite familiar to it. The idea of a suffering king and the just one offering himself for the sins of his fellow men was based on a very ancient rite in the whole of the early world, the traces of which can be easily found out in the Old Testament. From this ancient scripture, if from any book, St. Paul derived the germ-cell of his crucified and risen Christ. Over and above, he undoubtedly drew his inspiration from Alexandrian Neo-Platonism which ultimately developed into the story of the gospel Jesus. The very central doctrine of that story is humiliation at first and exaltation afterwards of the Saviour. And the miniature picture of this with all its main details is found in the fifty-third chapter of *Isaiah* which Dr. Drews takes to be "the solid nucleus round which all the rest has crystallised" (*Witnesses*, p. 169). A very cursory view of the chapter bears him out. We find in it that the long expected Saviour has already come down in human form and sacrificed himself for the sins of his people. A few random extracts will put the point beyond all reasonable doubts:

Saviour already come in *Isaiah's* time.

> Rejected of men, a man of sorrows, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment. And he made his grave with the wicked. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Those who are in the least acquainted with the New Testament need not now be told that *Isaiah's* Servant of God is the mould into which was thrown the life of the gospel-Jesus, and both the blemishes and excellences of Christianity were proportionately derived from the same source.

The very foundation of the deity of Christ is laid deep in *Isaiah*. The miracles of the Servant of God supply the incentive to the supernatural deeds of the gospel hero: "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness" (29^{18}). "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (35^{6}). Even cursing the fig tree has its Old Testament motive. Jeremiah has made the Lord say: "There shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree and the leaf shall fade" (8^{13}. See also *Hosea*, 13^{15}). From this and from what follows it is difficult to accept the following remark as coming from the pen of such a reputed Hebrew scholar as R. Travers Herford: "Prophecy might be thought to point to him; but prophecy drew no picture beforehand by which Jesus was actually recognised when he did come" (*The Pharisees*, p. 201). But the world now knows that the picture of Jesus was actually drawn from the so-called prophecies. So it is very late in the day to raise the question whether or not Jesus was recognised when he came. Rev. Herford has proved more than he ever dreamt to do.

c. Job and Job's Testament.

And, we have seen, not *Isaiah* alone among the ancient worthies, real or imaginary, but, along with others, the canonical *Job* (probably of non-Hebraic origin) not to speak of the hero of the *Job's Testament*, is a prototype, if not the original of the gospel Christ. The life of Jesus, at least in some of its aspects, especially towards the end of the narrative, is found to be a faithful dramatisation of the following passages of *Job* (Chaps. 16^{10}-17^{9}). Also see 39 ^{1}, $^{9-11}$, ^{20} :

Job also supplies materials.

God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. They have gaped upon me with their mouth ; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themselves together against me. He (God) hath broken me asunder, he hath also taken me by my neck. His archers compass me round about, he poureth out my gall upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach. My face is foul with

weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death. Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure. Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. My friends scorn at me, but mine eye poureth out tears unto God. My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me. Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?

The Job's Testament is considered by scholars, especially by Spitta, as a pre-Christian Jewish work—"One of the Jewish preconditions of Christianity, a full knowledge of which is of great importance for an appreciation of Christianity itself, and especially of the figure of Jesus." Instituting, in this light, a comparison between Job and the hero of the gospels, he says: "Job and Jesus are both of royal race, both are healers of the poor and distressed; both struggle against the power of Satan, and are fruitlessly tempted by him to fall away from God; both incur suffering and contempt, even death, by the machinations of the devil; both are saved from necrotes [the state of death], attain honour on earth, and are raised to the throne at the right hand of God" (as quoted from *Zur Geschichte* by Drews in *Witnesses*, p. 182). There are differences in the two pictures, no doubt, but that is immaterial. Is not Sree Rama or Sree Krishna different at different hands? The ideals of different times and of changed circumstances can not be the same. When the last story-teller delineates his subject matter he very naturally makes himself up-to-date by putting together all the parts of all the stories of allied nature that have gone before. And not the petty story-teller alone is of this stamp. The consummation of literary art lies that way. The monumental example of such a synthesis in a grand scale is found in Homer (cp. Guha's *Socrates*). However, we return to the cononical book. Job himself recites a portion of his life story thus:

Job changed into Jesus.

When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street...the aged arose and stood up. The princes refrained talking and laid their hand on their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor, and the cause I knew not I searched out. Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my

counsel. After my words they spake not again ; and my speech dropped upon them. I laughed on them when they despaired ; they believed it not, and the light of my countenance they cast not down. I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners" (Chap. 29).

Does not the above remind us of Jesus at his best, surrounded, as the evangelists tell us, in the market-places and the streets by his followers, speaking to the astonished multitude ; confuting the Pharisees and Scribes who confront him with mischievous questions, but themselves dumfoundered and silenced by his clever (?) answers ; with untiring zeal moving from place to place succouring the poor, consoling the helpless, healing the sick, himself blessed and worshipped by the lost and the saved ? Of course, Jesus' Durvásá traits are wholly wanting in Job, and therefore not found enumerated here. Their *raison d'être* is to be sought elsewhere. However, in this connection with regard to the Pharisees and Sadducees as introduced in the gospels, a doubt crops up whether or not these busy nobodies are entirely fictitious personages. According to eminent authorities they belong, historically considered, to the 2nd century priest-hood of Judæa and not to that of the 1st century. Moreover, the answers which are said to have confounded them do credit neither to Jesus nor to his opponents. Take the case of plucking the ears of corn. In defence of the conduct of his disciples Jesus says that the priests too offer sacrifice in the temple on the Sabbath day and "are blameless" (*Matt.* 12^{3-6}), as if the offering of sacrifice is forbidden on that day, or the plucking of corns and the offering of sacrifice are acts of the same nature. And we are asked to believe that at this the shrewd Rabbis, the Professors of Law, were at once silenced. But this is how the disciples are made to represent their master, real or fictitious. As regards the Benares debate, the A'ryas hold that their Guru Dayánanda Sarasvati got a decided victory over the orthodox Pandits. But his opponents render a very different account. One way of silencing an unwary questioner is to resort to *ignoratio elenchi.* Thousands of years ago, Nachiketá, a prince, asked Yama whether the individual soul survived death, and, in answer, he got that the Universal Self is eternal. Yet, at death, we are deriving from it solace for our lacerated heart all these long years. A wily Sadducee put such an inconvenient question to Jesus, though for a quite different purpose and from a quite different standpoint. But Jesus said that God was the God of the living, He was the God of

Pharisees and Jesus : a fictitious conjunction.

Abraham and others. What the poor Patriarchs had to do with the question nobody has ever cared to examine. But all the same "the multitude were astonished at his doctrines" as *Matthew* insists on informing us. God eternally lives in His paradise of the living, but that has never satisfied the questioning heart whether life is not extinguished at death. Jesus rebuked his opponents for their ignorance of the law, but if he himself knew the law or, for the matter of that, the gospellers knew it, there was a plain answer to give to this plain question. Because, according to the law, however much married the woman may be, she never ceases to be the wife of her first husband. But, as usual, the mouth of the Sadducees must have been stopped all the same without receiving the proper answer. And this is in accordance with the universal law of the disciples' biassed report about their master. Such things have their fitting place only in a fiction and therefore we find them here. In these places, ostensibly without avail, an imitation has been attempted of the Platonic dialogues where Socrates successfully confutes his opponents.

Jesus' silence in the Trial.

It is often spoken of Jesus by way of praise that he did not defend himself, but how many of his admirers have ever enquired about the cause of it. The reason why this attitude of non-co-operation, quite inconsistent with his whole career, was foisted on him, is to be sought somewhere else in the previous history of Israel. We read in *Isaiah* about the Servant of God : "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he *opened not his mouth* ; he is brought as a *lamb* to the slaughter, and as a *sheep* before her shearers is *dumb*, so he *openeth* not his mouth." Josephus, already referred to (see S. pp. 177 and 185), describes a Jesus, meek and venerated as a prophet and martyr, "who predicts "woe to Jerusalem" ; is flogged till his bones show, but never utters a cry ; makes no reply when challenged ; returns neither thanks for kindness nor railing for railing ; and is finally killed by a stone projectile in the siege." (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 125. See also the first part of the *Christ-Myth* and *Witnesses*, p. 247).

d. The Just Man of *Wisdom* and Plato's *Republic*

And the model is to be sought not in the Old Testament alone. Both in Plato's *Republic* and in *Wisdom* the same fate awaits the Just man. After giving a graphic description of how persecutions and sufferings would be heaped upon him, the humiliation of the righteous reaches its climax in the second book of the *Republic* (361) where the Just man being taken as unjust "will be scourged,

racked and bound, will have his eyes burnt out, and at last having suffered every ill he will be crucified." And crucifixion is a Roman mode of punishment. But Jesus was crucified and not stoned as is expected from the Jewish circumstances. There can not be any doubt that the inspiration for the final scene of Jesus' Passion was drawn from outside and why not from Plato, if from anybody else at all. And in the book of *Wisdom* "the godless deliberate about condemning the Just to a shameful death." But this "shameful death" is not the end of it all. That exaltation and eternal life and glory is the portion of the God's elect was early set forth in *Wisdom* in the clearest possible terms :

Wisdom **and** *Republic* **speak of Passion.**

Death and Exaltation too.

> The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment can touch them. *Only according to the folly of the unwise do they seem to be dead.* For if they have been punished in the eyes of men, *their hope was full of the faith in immortality.* Like gold in the crucible has he *tried* them and like *the gift of a whole offering has he accepted them.* And at the time of their home-coming they will *shine bright.* They shall judge the *heathen* and *rule over the peoples,* and the Lord shall be their *king* for ever. *They who trust in him shall know the truth, and the faithful will remain with him in love*". Again, "For his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore did he hasten to take him from the wicked world. *The just will himself judge the living godless after death.* But the just live in eternity, and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore will they receive the kingdom of glory and the crown of beauty from the hand of the Lord." In *Isaiah* (52^{13}) also we read :—"Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

In *Wisdom* the Just are called "the sons of God." From the above we collect all the fundamental ideas of Christian mysteries—suffering Son of God, sacrificing himself and expiating the sins of humanity, taken to heaven, glorified, living with God in eternity etc., etc. However, the just in his divine glory as the judge of the godless after their death, was necessarily blended in the mind of the pious Jew with the expected Saviour who must appear in his exalted glorification. And the sufferings of the Messiah as the Redeemer pave the way for the fulfilment of his proud mission, viz, the salvation of mankind by atoning their guilt and offering eternal happiness to the faithful. For the Jewish people the passages in *Isaiah* had "a mysterious reference to some preceding suffering and

humiliating death of the expected Saviour, and," observes Dr. Drews, "thus Israel's Saviour fell into line with the suffering, dying, and rising gods of the religions of nearer Asia" (*Witnesses, p.* 174). In the monotheistic Jewish mind the idea of the Saviour did not long remain separated from Yahweh and the 'Son of God' was identified with his father. And Yahweh was sometimes worshipped under the name of Jesus. This evidently led to an apparent tragedy in the gospels.

Prediction of second coming unredeemed.

There we find the atoning redeemer, but not the glorified *king* except on the cross with the crown of thorns. This was too much for the faithful to bear. In our country, if the *Yátrá* performance is of Sree Rama's *exile*, a scene of his coronation must be surreptitiously added at the end, because the householder, at whose bidding the performance is given, would not, on principle, allow the King of Ayodhyá to remain *banished* in his house. So in the case of the gospel. Some shrewd scribe introduced the emphatic prediction by Christ himself of his coming as a judge, evidently with the purpose of accelerating the pace of the kingdom (vide *infra* pp. 329-330), and it has not yet been fulfilled. This inconvenient passage has caused much searching of heart among those who stlll believe in the antediluvian doctrine of verbal inspiration. However, Dr. Martineau in his *Seat of Authority in Religion* has in a masterly way examined the question from his own standpoint coming to the conclusion that the prediction "was a posthumous and retros pective product worked out by disciples" thereby supporting the view we have taken. Vide *Conclusion*, S. p. 304.

e. Dionysos of the *Eleusinian Mysteries*.

It is related in the Gospel according to *St. Matthew* that when Jesus was born in the days of Herod the King, though Herod was gathered to his fathers a few years before the Christian era, there came wise men from the East to pay their homage to the child. What does this homage consist in ? In reply to this query, Dr. Adolf Harnack of

Birth-story a "lofty legend."

Berlin University hurries to inform us that it is no myth, but a part of a lofty legend. At that time many religions came to and flourished in the Greco-Roman world which contributed to Christianity what they had to contribute and were in their turn ultimately absorbed in it. This is the kind of homage they paid and this is the worship these wise men made. We, by analysing a single corner stone of the grand edifice of Jesus-myth, propose to show what one mythology alone contributed to the upbuilding of Christianity.

The Greek Dionysos is one of such saviour-Gods, as Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Mithra and a host of others who are said to have suffered and died for humanity and risen again from the dead. It is so obvious a nature-myth that it could not but arrest the attention of men all the world over from the very dawn of human history. The influence of this myth on the central doctrine of Christianity is too apparent to need any mention. I cull certain minor details of the Dionysos-cult as they have suggested themselves to me from the study of Professor Guha's *Socrates* (Bengali) and collate them with those of the Jesus-legends, leaving the issue to the student of comparative mythology. They may draw their own conclusion as they like.

Points of contact between. Jesus and Dionysos.

1. The resemblance of the wood-cut of Dionysos (reproduced by Prof. Guha from *The Cults of the Greek States* of L. R. Farnell) and the cross-bearing Jesus is too striking to ignore. It is to be remarked by the way that the early Christians were adverse to the portraiture of Jesus, because of their anti-pagan and anti-idolatrous tendencies. They, consequently, at first took Jesus to be of ugly features in view of a passage in the Old Testament. In time their iconoclastic propensities abated; so latterly, when another passage was discovered purporting to make the Saviour very handsome, it is not unlikely that the portrait of one of the current Saviour-Gods was requisitioned, and who could better serve as a model than the Greek-Dionysos? See St. Veronica legend in f. n. S. p. 37.

Physical features.

2. Both Dionysos and Jesus died young and youth is a condition in a sacrificial victim.

3. In the worship of Dionysos especially women took a prominent part; the female element predominates in the Jesus-story also, beginning with "Jesus was born of a woman." This conspicuity of women has been a great drawback for a biography. Jesus' permission, inspite of protests, to a public woman to besmear his body with ointment remains a knotty problem yet to be solved, if historicity is insisted upon.

Prominence of women.

4. Dionysos is pre-eminently a wine-god and Jesus was a "wine-bibber"—a wine-bibber of no common order. At the Cana festival (*John* 2[3]) wine suddenly ran short. It is not in the ordinary course that food-stuffs run short in a marriage-feast. Then why? Dean Farrar supplies the reason: "The presence of Jesus and his five disciples may well have been the cause of this un-expected deficiency" (*Life of Christ*, vol. i, p. 163). And they were not

uninvited guests. In the Jesus-story wine has found an undue prominence. We expected quite the opposite from the context. This can be explained only from some unavoidable prepossession of the writer's mind. The stamp of extraneous influence is too indelibly impressed on the forehead of the story. Dionysos as a wine-god is most intimately related with Jesus. The latter's well-known act of turning water into wine, called the Cana Miracle, alluded to above, establishes a family relationship between the two, merging one's identity into the other. The episode has been bodily borrowed in the gospel from the original performance of Dionysos. The Cana incident is highly spoken of as the first miracle, and it is spoken of Dionysos : "it was chiefly as the god of the vineyard, and the inventor of wine, that he was held in honour" (Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 6). In the Eleusinian mysteries the Dionysiac miracle was enacted every year in the first week of January during the festival of that particular God. And when we see that in the Catholic Church the Cana Miracle is placed on 6th January, the story of the misappropriation by the Christian gospel of the pagan mystery is revealed in all its native simplicity. But Jesus' genesis from the wine-God Dionysos or Bacchus is traced more graphically in its true light in John 15[1] where the Christ declares himself to be "the true vine". The reason is not far to seek why he so describes himself. In the Dionisiac myth as well as in the case of our Vedic *Soma*, the God is identified with the plant. In some aspects a Vegetation-God also, Dionysos (the Wine Deity) is naturally credited with that force in nature which actually causes the colourless sap (water) to turn into grape-juice (wine). This is the meaning of the mystery in the Dionysiac myth. Now the Christian God claims this power. But how can this power be ascribed to a historical person, as Jesus is taken to be, without reducing the cult to mythology ?

Wine-miracle a Dionysiac enactment. (See xixa)

5. In connection with the worship of Dionysos we find the mention of Mystery Dramas and Passion Plays, the Greek drama actually arising out of Dionysos festivals. It has been proved beyond all doubts that the gospels, especially their latter parts, were transcribed from some Mystery Drama and Passion Play. See S. pp. 279-280.

Passion and Eucharist too.

6. The worshippers of Dionysos ate the flesh and drank the blood of the sacrificed bull (the bull being the symbol of the god himself) in order to bring about a union of the worshippers with the deity as the god and the sacrificial victim were identical. And it was for this very

purpose Jesus is related to have substituted bread and wine as his flesh and blood. The substitution of the older ceremony for the newer is too unmistakable for any dispute.

7. And it was the devotees of the God Dionysos only in Greece who aspired after this mystic union with the Deity. For others it was almost a taboo.

Mystic union.

8. It is they also who hoped for a life eternal. Of course, this was five hundred years before the Christian era.

Life eternal.

9. It was the worshippers of Dionysos in the midst of the non-proselytising Greeks who converted others to their cult.

Proselytisation.

10. Every year in the Bull temple the wife of the King Archon was to be the bride of Dionysos, and the Queen ought to have been a virgin when married with the 'King'. We are accustomed to hear of the 'bride of Christ', but she must be a virgin. "The bride of Christ", says Paul Carus, "has its ultimate foundation in the myths of pre-Christian Saviours". Christ's marriage with Catharine was only a careful repoduction of the marriage between Dionysos and Ariadne—Catharine's Greek name is *Aikaterina*. This Catharine-Christ myth, as one egg with the other, is on all fours with our Rádhá-Krishna-cult, if the latter's grosser elements are expurgated. Of course, it cannot be said with certainty that any indelicacies were not attached to the former story also, as it has passed through many revisions and emendations.

The bride of Christ.

11. It was Dionysos only who had his festivals, curiously enough—it is an exceptional phenomenon—both in winter and spring, and we have got Christmas and Easter as Jesus-festivals.

Both winter and spring festivals.

12. The spring festivities of Dionysos were associated with the dead and were also to be continued for three days as required for their coming to the world and passing away to the other side.

13. In some respects the festivals of Dionysos were of the eat-drink-and-be-merry kind, and we find that Jesus too was not at all uninclined to appreciate this very common trait of human nature, considering his reply to the objection, raised even by his disciples against pouring precious oil on his head by a *woman*, as they thought it an unnecessary and wasteful luxury. Other parallels will suggest themselves as we proceed.

Jesus came eating and drinking.

Divine father and earthly mother.

14. Both Jesus and Dionysos were born of earthly mothers begotton by a heavenly father—Semele, the mother of Dionysos, being the unmarried daughter of Cadmus, the King of Thebes, and Mary being the *unknown* wife of Joseph. Here we get the explanation of the evangelists' undue eagerness for finding a royal lineage for Jesus, effected by connecting Joseph with David—an obvious interpolation. But Joseph had no hand in the birth of Jesus, Mary being an *eternal* virgin. Nothing daunted the exegetes proceed to find light where only darkness prevails. Dionysos's mother was the daughter of a King. Who knows, it was not for this reason that a desperate attempt has been made to show Mary's descent from David ! We find the following edifying discourse in *Murray's Illustrated Bible Dictionery :* "In none of these (Biblical) passages is it said that St. Mary was *not* of the lineage of David". So making the coast clear, argues our authority, "St. Paul's words in *Rom.* 1[3] | about Jesus | who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, have been understood as referring to our Lord's actual birth rather than to his birth-right as the legal heir of Joseph, in which case, of course, they must imply that His mother as well as His foster father was of Davidic lineage. *Must* indeed, of necessity !

15. Dionysos had to be brought up in secret as a child for fear of his life. Here also the Greek god supplies the model for the Christian deity.

16. Dionysos's step mother Hérè turned him mad and Jesus' mother Mary took Jesus for mad.

17. Jesus is said to have had a second birth at Baptism and Dionysos was twice-born.

Carried by two asses.

18. Two asses carried Dionysos (an evident allusion to the zodiacal sign of Cancer) and Jesus too is said to have ridden two asses on an important occasion of his life (S.p. 271). To ride simultaneously two unbroken colts in a mob procession ! It is certainly a sight for gods to see and an undeniable historical fact for men to believe in and to come from thousands of miles away to preach among a people already afflicted by a plethora of higher myths, allegories and legends ! Man is called a rational animal, but unfortunately in most cases *minus* reason.

19. A goat-legged figure beside a young god on a mountain top —when graphically represented, we find the Biblical tempter and Jesus in the classical Silenus and Dionysos.

20. The Christian painters always added an ox and an ass to the manger of Jesus and both are symbols of Dionysos.

21. Jesus in the manger had its parallels in the babe Dionysos carried in a basket in the sacred procession. "Cradled in a food measure" (basket used for food of the cattle) is a common appellation of Dionysos.

22. The dolphin was sacred to Dionysos, and fish figured prominently in the early Christian Eucharist, the central ritual most sacred to the church.

Feeding of the five thousand.

23. Jesus' feeding of the Five Thousand is only an improvement upon the feeding of the host of Dionysos in the desert. All myths pass through such evolutions, our one-headed *Káliya* Serpent, passing through several *pouranic* touches, in the long run reappears as a hydra. It is just how a myth proceeds. Moreover, in the case of the Jesus-story, we find the feeding tale duplicated in the Bible. Why? The writer borrowed it from somewhere to be incorporated in his story. But forgetting, as we often do in quoting a passage, that the thing was already introduced in an earlier connection, reintroduced the episode on another occasion. So the theme has become doubly mythical.

24. 25. 26. Dionysos is also conceived as Lord of the underworld, the soul of the world (*Logos*) and the inspirer of chastity and self-purification. Vide *Pagan Christs*, p. 206.

Jesus' easy yoke.

27. In another point the Eleusinian mysteries have been bodily transferred to the gospels and that without rhyme or reason. Because the Christ in *Matt.* 11[29-30], abruptly invites his followers to accept his *yoke*—"my yoke is easy, my burden is light," without any previous intimation as to the nature of that yoke. The passage betrays its origin in some set formula taken to serve some cult-purpose. It can not be even remotely connected with the historical utterance of a teacher. No teacher ever acts in so purposeless a way. This has obviously been borrowed from the Dionysian mystery-drama. The chorus of Euripides' *Bacchoe* is made to sing: "Coming from the land of *Asia*, having left the sacred Tmolus, I dance in honour of Bromius [Surname of Dionysos], *a sweet labour and a toil easily borne*, celeberating the the God Bacchus" (Buckley's translation, vv. 64-68). Read also in conjunction with the mysteries of Isis and Mithra, two most familiar deities of the time, "the speech of Jesus, so purposeless as it stands in the gospel, is at once elucidated" (*Christianity and Mythology*, p. 388). Like a large slice of the Bible this too is a transcrip-

tion from the mystery drama. *Ecclesiasticus* 51^{23-27} also may be alluded to here. The invocation is really against the whole tenor of the gospel teaching, which is a heavy burden,—extra-ordinarily heavy for an ordinary mortal. It is sheer madness to think that to sell one's property and "follow me", crucify the flesh, desert one's family, hate father and mother, empty the pocket to the thief, turn the other cheek to the smiter, so on and so forth—are a light burden and an easy yoke. Does he not say—whoever does not bear his cross and come after him can not be his disciple ; or to be so, one must renounce his all ? (*Luke* 14^{26-33}also *Mark* 8^{34-38}). It is well said, mythology is too unconscious not to betray itself. Here Jesus is "meek and lowly," but very frequently "a greater than Solomon" (*Luke* 11^{31}). And throughout his arrogant attitude is patent, so much so that it struck the Rabbis as blasphemous (*Mark* 2^{7}). Did he not in the place of the Old-Testament style—"Thus saith the Lord," introduce his style—"I say unto you"? This is anything but "meek and lowly." Yes, "to attempt to build up the character of Christ from the Gospels is utterly futile (McCabe, *The Sources of the Morality of the Gospels*, p. 310), because the gospellers do not mean an historical narrative. So, in order to swell the life of the manufactured god with numerous events—the more the merrier as they say, and with a view to bring him in line with the current gods, the writers and their interpolators never hesitated, knowingly or unknowingly, to introduce cart-loads of myths and fables into the story from whatever sources they could lay their hands on. Verily, if the Alexandrian Library had not been destroyed, who knows, every word of the Bible could not have been traced to its original in this or that ancient literature. Yet enough has already been unearthed.

Solar birth-date.

28. 29. 30. Dionysos is saluted with the title of Deliverer and Liberator (Haigh, work cited, p. 6). Also "only begotten." He was born on the winter-solstice day as Jesus is said to have been. Every body now knows that it is a got-up birth-day in imitation of that of Disnysos and other Sun-gods. In Bethynia the month beginning on 24th December was known as Dionysos. But in the Roman period some calendars made it begin on December 25th (Vide C. M. P. 192 f.n.) It is a notorious fact of history as has been pointed out by Dr. Frazer that early Christians had no birth-festival, and it is curious that though two of the gospels are alleged to have been written by two apostles, and Christ's divinity was established in his life time, no birth-date is found in the gospels. But all around many Saviour-Gods' birth was being

celebrated on the 25th December, viz., of Dionysos, Mithra, Adonis, etc. And the 25th December is the birth-day of the sun according to the Greek Almanac prepared by the astrologer Philochalus, and therefore of all the above mentioned Sun-gods ; so of Christ as their successor in the mythical line. And that this solar festival was transferred to the Christian Calendar because of its popularity in the Roman Empire is admitted on all hands and well attested by its justification by St. Augustine that the Christians should observe the day not as the Sun's birth-day but as that of the Creator of the sun. It should also be noted here that the Chinese celebrated the birth-day of the Buddha at the winter solstice as F. M. Leslie reports (*The Bengalee*, June 24, 1925) However, the birth-story may also be interpreted as an historical allegory. The birth is not the birth of a person but of a religious movement to which the wise men from the East offered their homage, i. e., the early religions developed it by their contributions, as noted at the outset. Miss J. E. Harrison in her *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* shows that Dionysos came from Thrace (pp. 364-379), and Jesus is an immigrant from Egypt ; Dionysos underwent sufferings (pp. 493-494), so did Jesus ; there was the sacrificial rite of eating the raw flesh of Dionysos (p. 496), so is the Christian Eucharist consisting in the eating of the flesh of Jesus—the paschal lamb, and the lamb is sacred to Dionysis (p. 594). The Christian baptism was originally a purification ceremony (शुद्धि:), a substitute for circumcision, and the mystery of Dionysos was primarily a ceremony of purification (p. 154). It is not uncommon to find in a portrait that, though young, Jesus possesses a beard. But, here too, who is the model if not Dionysos who "is, in the full bloom of his youth, not elderly though bearded" (p. 407). These contributions of other creeds and cultures to Christianity are not a thing to be hidden under a bushel. Says Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal in *Vaishnavism and Christianity*, p. ix : "Semitic mysteries, Hebraic codes and prophecies, Egyptian symbolisms, Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies, Gnostic and neo-Platonic ecstacies and emanations, Buddhist renunciation and monachism, Greek culture and Roman jurisprudence, Gothic custumaries and Romanesque art, each in turn has been absorbed and comprehended in the Christian faith and consciousness." This is in outline. If details are taken into consideration many strange and unexpected reveations are made, of which the above is only a broad hint.

Christianity historically a mythological amalgam (S. pp. 3-7).

f. Julius and Augustus

Date of Saviour's death.

Now we come to the last point. To fix a date for the death of the Saviour has been a hopeless muddle all through owing to contradictions, as is the case with all mythical dates (S. p. 191). The year 34 (S. p. 4 f. n.) is reported by historians to have been a time of strain for the Roman Empire for more than one reason. Especially the death of Tiberius was expected every moment at Rome, and in Egypt the fabulous bird phœnix, the symbol of the rejuvenation of the world, was announced. So both death and resurrection were being talked of throughout the Empire, thereby giving an additional impetus to fixing the Saviour's death to that year. At the outset the life of Jesus, a life based on astral figures, was necessarily described unhistorically. But now it was historicised and a historical date was fixed. From time to time natural phenomena as related in the gospels are caught hold of to settle the date. But this is also a hopeless task. Eclipses, earthquakes, etc., are universal requisites for describing the birth and death of great men. It is said, even Julius Cæsar's birth was announced by a peculiar star, and his death by a special earthquake. The name Julius has a peculiar fascination for us in this connection. Many old gods have *Jes* added to their names. These gods have a Virgin as their mother (Mariamma, Maritala or Mariam etc.) whose history agrees in essential particulars will Christ's, as Drews remarks in *Witnesses*, p. 197. Her symbol is alternately the fish, the lamb, or the cross. Her feast is the Huli (Jul) from which the Cæsar took his name when he was deified. An account of this interesting subject can be had from *The Worship of Augustus Caesar* by Alex. del Mar. See also Volney's *Ruins*. Next, let us take up the case of Augustus. Is it possible that the gospellers did not collect some materials from these lives nearer home? From papyri, edicts and inscriptions recently discovered, it is known that before a date was fixed for the birth of Jesus, the birth-day of Augustus who assumed the title, 'Son of God,' was heralded as the beginning of 'gospels' for the world ; the end of war was in sight, and peace should prevail on earth and sea. He was literally the *prince of peace*. He was called the 'Saviour' of the whole human race. It was foretold that a king would be born to the Roman people and the terrified senate ordered the death of every child born that year. And to crown all, "the future emperor's mother had conceived him miraculously in the temple of Apollo" (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 126). No wonder, then, that the Jews, who by that time gave up all hopes of a world power

Contributions from the lives of Julius and Augustus.

with Jerusalem as its centre, would refuse to surrender to the Roman conqueror the last vestige also of their religious superiority. So, as a reaction against the apotheosis of an earthly usurper, they forthwith gave a concrete shape to their Messianic dream, and accorded to the Christ, thus framed, all the attributes claimed by their tormentor, in order to gain, as it were, in the other world what they lost in this. And under the circumstances there would be no lack of devotees. This is the psychology of the Christ-myth, at least, in one aspect of it (vide S. H. C. p. 60). On the other hand, the gospel dates are hopelessly false chronologically, betraying their fictitious character. "It is quite time to listen to the learned Jews (Graetz, Joel, Chwolson, Lippe, Lublinski) who say," observes Dr. Drews, "that in point of fact it is the conditions of the second, not the first, century that have provided the frame-work of the gospel story in detail" (*Witnesses*, p. 215). And we should not forget that the gospels were composed in the 2nd century. Montefiore also remarks : "The prevailing Pharisaism of the Rabbis of Jesus's age was not militant" (*Synoptic Gospels* (Revised Ed.), vol. ii, p. 200). However, the immediate impulse for historicisation came from the fall of the Temple and the consequent dispersion of the Jews. The cult of Jesus-God or that of Jesus Barabbas and already other esoteric cults (see *infra* Ch. xx.) had their offshoots in Judæa and Alexandria. The dispersed Jews gave a new inspiration to those outside Judæa, and they at once gained in strength and volume. The Fall connoted that the God of the Jews could not protect his own people. The invention of the Messiah with his Second Coming was the consequence. Who knows that the crucifixion is not also symbolical of the Destruction, and the second coming, of the advent of the New Jerusalem ? An appeal to the Greek speaking people met with an instant success because of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. No other religion could offer its proselytes a sacred book translated into the vernacular. But the *Logos* or its substitutes were too much for ordinary men. An historical personage as the central figure of the movement was necessary for its success—"साधकानां हितार्थाय ब्रह्मणो रूप-कल्पना" became a desideratum (see S. pp. 150-152). Immediately it was proclaimed in terms of a typical and world-wide myth that the expected Saviour of the Jews had already come, suffered and risen again from the dead, and Montefiore points out : "upon this illusion hinged the great religious result which we call Christianity"

Jesus the consequence of Jewish opposition to Augustus as Saviour.

Circumstances propitious for the creed.

(Ib. p. 399). This welcome news no one dared to reject, as He would reappear to reward the believers and punish the waverers and sceptics. Though the superstition of the Second Coming is at present enjoying a fresh lease of life throughout Christendom, especially at the hands of Miss Christabel Pankhurst in England and Mrs. Aimée Macpherson in the United States, it was not then realised as forestalled (S. p. 304). How could it be otherwise? The eschatological discourses of the Christ were only added to the story from some Judaic apocryphal prophecies. "The Christians simply took over the Jewish apocalypses," so says Dr. Georg Hollmann of Halle in his *Jewish Religion in the Time of Jesus* (p. 92), thus making the former only a continuous development of the latter. But the Jewish apocalypse itself, in its turn, "consists partly of very ancient, sacred, mythological elements from foreign religions which are often misunderstood and misinterpreted" (p. 99), and on which "at decisive points Persian influences were operative". So also the Babylonian and Egyptian religions (p. 127). This Christian absorption of non-Christian and non-Jewish elements then turns the newness of the New Testament into that of a thrice told tale. What has Dr. Conybeare to say to this to whom the purity of Judaism is almost a first principle? This point has been fully discussed by Dr. R. H. Charles in his *Eschatology*, Ch. IX. That this addition was an after-thought is easily established. It was a necessity to counter the evil effects of the ignominious death of the Messiah (S. p. 241). But, all the same, the belief was universal. "There is not a single writer of the New Testament", Dr. Charles insists, "who does not look forward to the personal return of Christ in his own generation. And what the New Testament taught, all primitive Christendom believed, and fashioned its practical life in accordance with this hope" (*Esch.* p. 387.) We know from our own experience that, at a time when disruptive forces are at work, people's mind being in a convulsive state, such crude prophecies find a ready credence—even such as "in three months *Swaráj* in India", and on that belief the educated people of the 20th century courted imprisonment in the British jail! Who would risk the consequences of such a disbelief when the old world is threatened with immediate dissolution? And this superstition alone contributed more than anything else to the foundation of the church. "Without the expectation of a near return of Christ," says Strauss, "no Christian church whatever would have come into existence." On the other hand, "few of the Hellenistic converts of Syria or Asia Minor, where Christianity gained its first successes, would have the competence or the desire to investigate

such accounts. If any displayed the inclination, they were told that belief without evidence was a virtue.* The story, besides", reflects Mr. Whittaker, "had close affinity with their own religious ideas ; and it had been placed in the time before a convulsion deeply affecting all who, practising less organised cults, looked with awe on the tremendous claims of Judaism" (O. C., p. 31). Thus Christianity with a legendary but historicised personality at the fountain head was ushered in into the world.

But why was this comparatively later date preferred if the cult were ancient ? This question may pertinently be raised. I cull the reply, from the *Rationalist Annual* ; 1927, by Dr. Edward Greenly of the **Geological Society** :

Reasons for the date.

> I think that, in this connection, an important consideration has been overlooked. The system took over the old "official" deity Yahweh, as, in view of its largely Jewish origin, it was bound to do. But in so doing it adopted a divine kingship of the most exclusive kind. The great resurgence of the cult, however, took place within the Roman Imperium, where men's minds were of necessity permeated with the idea of universal dominion. The two ideas were inevitably combined, thus evolving what can be termed Theocratic Imperialism. Now, if Jesus had been relegated to a remote period, he would have been made to appear when the cultus was quite obscure and (what is more important still) on the restricted stage of Jewry. For a nascent Theocratic Imperialism that was not enough. When he appeared it must be on the stage of the world—on the universal stage. It must, therefore, be a time when Jews and Romans could appear together. That limited the time to the period during which Judæa had been a Roman province, but before the siege of Jerusalem. And of that period no division was so suitable as the procuratorship of the unpopular Pilate, who had suppressed disturbances with bloodshed.

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* "Blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed" (*Jn.* 20[29]), The expression may also mean that *a priori* truths are superior to empirical truths. If it were the Synoptics this interpretation would seem absurd, but the question of *John* is different. It is not an improbable thesis with him as his *Prologue* raises much hope in our mind. But the context would go against it, if the Jesus be taken as an historical person. However, if he is taken to be the symbol of the Gnostic *Logos* then it is all right. Cp. 1 *Pet* 1[8] and 2 *Cor.* 5[7].

CHAPTER XIX.

PRE-CHRISTIAN SAVIOUR-GODS.

Prefatory Note—Reasons for God-making.

Sun-rise and sun-set are daily occurrences. They do not impress us. But it is not so all over the world under all circumstances. In the Arctic regions where the sun disappears for six months, the phenomenon can not pass unnoticed. And if the primitive man giving free reins to his fancy imagined the disappearance to be the death of the God and the reappearance to be his resurrection, we cannot blame him. Sun's waning splendour and its recovery in the course of the year, and the increasing and the decreasing phases of the moon do not go unnoticed even among the savages. The changes of the positions of the planets and the stars in the heavens always in the star-gazer's mind gave rise to thoughts which, at one stage of the evolution of humanity, could be given expression to only in the form from which myths and legends naturally developed. The vast and wonderful transformations that annually pass over the face of the earth have in all ages stirred the mind of man and engaged his attention, setting him meditating on the cause; because enquiry into the causal connection is innate in the human mind. No doubt, other things added to the riches and embellishments of his life, but to eat food and beget children were his primary needs in the past and they will remain his primary needs in the future. The stupendous changes of nature passing before his very eyes months after months powerfully affect these primary needs. Even the savage is not a disinterested onlooker of what passes before him. He clearly perceives how his life is intimately bound up with nature and the natural processes that dry up the water-courses, or freeze them and arrest the growth of vegetation, threatening his life with extinction. At one stage of human evolution men thought that they could influence the course of nature—cause the rain to fall, the sun to shine, the animals to breed, plants to give flowers and fruits. The means were in their hands, they imagined. They could arrest the progress of the decaying season or hasten the advent of the propitious one by *magic-art*. So incantations or *mantras* were invented in connection with certain rites or ceremonies. The gods or *devas* did not come in at this stage,

Natural phenomena supply materials for myths.

Rites first.

the *mantras* were all in all. When generations after, people began to reflect why they performed these rites and ceremonies, myths and legends made their appearance. As mankind advanced in knowledge, gods or *devas*—abstractions from vegetal, animal or astral phenomena, were added to these rites or ceremonies. Among the primary gods, corn-gods are the most prominent, specially within the temperate zones where the changes of the seasons affect vegetation more manifestly. Though two sides of life, vegetal and animal, go together, if the influence of these changes is at all felt in the animal, it is only in the pairing-time. On the vegetal life the two seasons, winter and spring, most powerfully act and re-act. In winter the vegetation is thought to go underground, signifying death and in spring it returns typifying re-surrection. To it the lunar and solar fancies being superadded, world's mythical gods and goddesses, were built up to which most, if not all, religions will bear testimony.

Devas follow as abstractions.

Death and resurrection a universal myth.

N. B. Mr. A. J. Weippert, in the Christmas number of the Calcutta *Englishman* (15. 12. 24), while waxing eloquent over the *Christ that is to be*, with reference to the Biblical account of the life and death of Jesus, in his blissful ignorance of the history of ancient religions, asks the question : "Is there a tale like it anywhere ?" Promptly the reply comes : Yes, there were at least five such tales which were being vividly and picturesquely represented through Mystery Plays in the midst of those very scenes of the Greco-Roman world where the Christ-myth was fashioned out of these materials. There remains no room for any reasonable doubt that earlier gods were hammered into the new saviour-god, Jesus. One finds a parallel in the *Táráttantram* recently published, for the first time, by the Barendra Research Society of Rájsháhi, Bengal, how Buddhadeva is being visibly transformed into the Mahádeva of the modern Tantras and Puranas. (See also E. J. Thomas, *Life of Buddha*, p. 223). We forthwith proceed to collect the accounts of early vegetal and astral gods who supplied materials for the Christ-myth.

Old materials for Christ-myth.

a. Greek Dionysos.

A great deal has already (p. 320) been said about Dionysos. A few more traits are here enumerated. Originally a corn-God, subsequently transformed into "the god of vine", "he of the tree" (J. P. p. 63) was annually slain (cp. "God Jesus who had died annually," P. C., p. 182) and buried that his blood might fertilise the field. In the Homeric period a general

Animal substitutes.

god of civilisation, Dionysos was afterwards specialised as the wine-god. At first a man was sacrificed, then a woman. So there were women Dionysi; in some cases a child was killed as Dionysos; later on, the god was discovered in a goat, and slain as the substitute of the human victim. At Tenedas a new-born calf was taken to be the equivalent of the human god, and the cow herself treated like a woman in child-bed.

Dionysiac Eucharist.

The Cretans sacrificed a bull and partook of the body and blood as the actual flesh and blood of the god, as in the Christian Eucharist.

Dionysos was the annual or the biennial wine-deity-victim, and the worshippers saw his resurrection and embodiment in the vine. The necessary intoxication was taken by them as the work of the god within. By this time wine and the wine-god were identified (cp. *Sôma-devatá* of the Vedic fame). To the worshippers the death and resurrection were physical realities, because, though killed in the body of an animal, he rises in the vine to give his blood once more to the votaries.

It has already been said that Dionysos was a general God of vegetation afterwards specialised. His images were formerly planted in different fields and orchards as representatives of different kinds of trees, of which the modern scarecrow may be taken as a degraded and utilitarian form. It is supposed, everywhere there was a local Dionysos. In the long run these separate Dionysi were generalised and spiritualised into the God Dionysos. And, as Frazer points out, the great Gods are classes and not individuals. The plentifulness of a God's personal traits is due to this fact. The death and resurrection of this primary vegetation-God were originally derived from, and then identifed with, the annual winter sleep of nature and her spring revival. From this the myth sprung that Dionysos, the son of Father Zeus, comes to the earth, is slain, rises from the dead, and finally ascends to his father.

Dionysiac resurrection.

Dionysos is annually married to the queen. He is tree-god in general and vine-god in particular. As a god of agriculture the winnowing fan is his symbol. So, in the myth, this is his cradle. It figures prominently in the mystic rites of Dionysos. He was sacrificed after being invested with the royal dignity. Shortly after his burial he rose from the tomb and ascended up to heaven. Virgin Semelé, his mortal mother, conceived him not by any man, but by taking in a potion of Dionysos' 'heart' (Is not "heart" the predecessor of Holy Ghost ?). The other legend says that the Father Zeus swallowed the "heart," and afterwards communicated it to Semelé. In the Passion of

Other traits—*Golden Bough.*

Dionysos all he had done or suffered in his last moments was enacted before the eyes of his worshippers. A casket supposed to contain his 'sacred heart' (What is "Sacred Heart of Jesus"?) was carried in front of the procession. In one myth of his death and resurrection, Dionysos descended into Hades. This symbolises the vegetation deity, as in Osiris, who is believed to pass a certain portion of the year under-ground, fittingly reappearing in the spring when the resurrection festival is held. A bull or goat is a symbol of the God, by eating whose flesh and drinking whose blood the worshippers believed to take in the God. Formerly human sacrifice was practiced. At one time or other the custom of sacrificing divine kings in the character of Dionysos prevailed.

It is to be noted that the Eucharist is a pre-Christian ritual. The myth that Jesus instituted it was added afterwards to explain why the Christians should observe it. It is not an unlikely hypothesis that there was secretly maintained an old private sacrament in connection with a hero-god, Jesus. It is then reminiscent of some primitive cannibalistic rite as practiced by ancestor worshippers (S. p. 78).

Eucharist pre-Christian.

It has already been pointed out that Dionysos was driven mad by Juno. It is to be remarked by the way that any derogatory trait in a god does not indicate history. This shows that textual scholarship as in Schmiedel cannot suffice for questions to be settled by anthropology, mythology, and hierology.

Derogatory trait not necessarily historical.

b. Egyptian Osiris

Osiris was originally a real king of This, a village near Abydos in Egypt, as the tradition has it. Both Allen and Loftie support this view. Idealised as the god of the dead, every pious man or mummy was looked upon as Osiris. Then he was turned into an annually slain corn-victim or corn-god. The Osirian festival lasted for five days. The god was cut to pieces and scattered throughout as a charm of fertilisation. In the myth, Typhon cuts the body. The God taught men the use of corn. So Osiris is a teaching god also. Red-haired oxen (desiring red wheat) were sacrificed to him, as bulls in the case of Dionysos. He was mourned by the reapers with the prayer that the god would return in the following year. The slain Osiris is identified with the old divine king as in other saviour-myths, and his resurrection means next year's harvest.

Osiris a teaching God.

The ancient Osirian rite still survives in Egypt in an attenuated

form (like the English mock-mayor-festival). On the first day of the Egptian solar year, all work is suspended for three days and a mock king wearing a dress of Osiris proceeds to the house of the governor, and is enthroned with scourge in hand. Like all sacrificial victims he enjoys royal authority for three days and is then condemned to death. He is burnt to ashes, but from the ashes the person rises. This is only the mimic of the ancient actual performance. Isis is Osiris's sister and wife. Here is a sun-myth added. In the Rig Veda (6-55[1-5]) the sun is "sister's paramour."

Resurrection no new idea.

In Egypt "the idea of resurrection was already so universal, and where every man desired to be "justified by Osiris" Christianity soon made an easy conquest of a people on whose faith it exerted so little change." (Allen's *Idea of God*. p. 400).

Other traits—*Golden Bough*.

Osiris was the most popular of the Egyptian gods whose death and resurrection were annually celebrated with alternate sorrow and joy. Osiris was born of the sun-god Ra's wife by an intrigue. As a King on earth he did good to the Egyptians. He was not only not averse to drinking, but himself also a preparer of the beverage. Osiris revealed his divine nature by turning water into wine" on January 5 (Brandes, *Jesus: A Myth*, p. 187). This is the original of the famous Cana miracle. The miracle is the credential of the Christ's divinity, and that enacted at Cana is the first of its kind. On the 5th January the star is said to have guided the three Magi to the child Christ, and the 6th was held to be the birth day of Jesus till in the fourth century it was transferred to December 25th in imitation of Dionysos (vide S. pp. 322-326). His brother Set or Typhon with 72 others plotted against him and killed him. But, as usual, resurrection took place. His death and resurrection were celebrated in Egypt by Passion Plays in which the part of the resurrected god was played by a boy. Mourning, especially by women, over the dead god is a special feature. In one aspect he was a corn-god as already mentioned.

Mourned by women.

He is addressed: "Thou art the father and mother of mankind, they live on thy breath, they subsist on thy body". In another aspect he is the ruler and judge of the dead. Osiris is a sun-god also. He suffered a violent death, but rose from the dead and was worshipped as a deity. The resurrection of Osiris gave the Egyptians not only a symbol but the pledge of a life everlasting for themselves beyond the grave. Partaking in the death of Osiris the votary is assured of immortality. "Nay, he does already share it, he becomes Osiris"

(Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, p. 99). There is this famous passage in the Egyptian text concerning the initiate: "As truly as Osiris lives, shall he live; as truly as Osiris is not dead, shall he not die; as truly as Osiris is not annihilated, shall he not be annihilated." (Inge's *Plotinus*, vol. i, p. 41). Has not Christianity incorporated the whole of it? Even the credit of inventing a myth can not now be conceded to it. However, it is for this reason that the death scene of Osiris was mimicked. The mummy of the deceased, when passed through the mysteries of burial, became Osiris himself, therefore fit for the life of resurrection. Hence the ceremonies observed by the Egyptians over the human dead were an exact copy of those performed over the dead god. Every Egyptian dead was mourned with the same words as were uttered over the corpse of Osiris.

Osirian resurrection a pledge for eternal life.

It is not out of place to remark that as god of the dead, one item of the Osirian celebrations in the middle of November was the illumination of all the houses to receive the souls of the dead—an all Souls' day—exactly as we Indians do it in this very season. Curious coincidence indeed!

N. B. The god of the plant is easily transformed into the plant. "You can loosely apply the term 'Osiris' both to (i) the real Osiris and (ii) the corn that comes from him, as you can apply the name 'Sun' both to (i) the real orb and (ii) the ray that comes from the orb" (Gilbert Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 191 f.n.).

c. Syrian Adonis.

The Adon or the Lord (=the *Adonai* of the Hebrew Bible) known as Thammuz is a Syrian God connected with the name-sake river. His death was annually mourned chiefly by women. His images, dressed like corpses, were carried as if for burial, and thrown into the river. Resurrection took place as in all cases. He ascended into heaven before the eyes of his worshippers. The red colour of the river water was identified with the God's blood. Death and resurrection, repeatedly told, is a myth for the sowing of the 'seed' and its reappearance as the plant for the good of the world.

Resurrection and ascension seen by worshippers.

The Greeks borrowed the worship of Adonis in the seventh century B. C. from the Semitic peoples of Syria and Babylonia. They, then, perhaps through a mistake, turned the general title of honour, *Adon* (Lord), into the proper name Adonis. He is the youthful lover of

Ishtar, "the great mother goddess, the embodiment of the reproductive energies of nature" (*Golden Bough*, ab. ed.,p. 325). There is a Hindu legend that the youthful S'iva, though produced by *Mahāśakti*, became her spouse through devotion. This is the case with the Rig-Vedic Sun as already referred to (S. p. 298). The idea has been fruitfully utilised by the Christ-myth also. *Revelation* 12[1] tells us that the Church is the mother of the Saviour, but afterwards she comes out as his bride (19[7]; 21[9]; 22[17]). The tragical death, the mourning by women, and the resurrection of the God—the common features of all such myths and rituals need not be reiterated in detail. As usual, Adonis rose on the third day and was "found" by women (S. H. C., p. 54). In Cyprus and Byblus, the rites are so similar to those of Osiris that some people are inclined to identify them. The birth of Adonis did not take place in the usual course. But, as befits a God, some unnaturalness there must be. Death, as is expected, is annually mourned, chiefly by women. Corpses are carried, as if for burial, and thrown into the river Resurrection follows. The ceremony observed in Phœnicia, probably in summer, was a vernal one. There were dramatic representations of death,. Resurrection formed a special feature. Its scenic vividness afforded a golden opportunity to its being incorporated in the life-story of an historicised person. He was "born of a woman" named Myrrh. In early times Adonis was sometimes personated by a living man who died a violent death in the character of the God. This could easily be translated into a sham biography by one who witnessed the performance. When rightly interpreted, the rituals, belonging to the worship of Adonis, reveal the fact that the death does not represent the natural decay of vegetation under the summer heat or the winter cold, but the cutting down of the corn by men and its threshing and grinding afterwards. Therefore, as a sign of the sacrificial mourning, "the woman (during this festival) eat nothing which has been ground in a mill, but limit their diet to steeped wheat, sweet vetches, dates, raisins and the like" (p. 338). The festival was held in July. How similar is the Indian *Ambuvāchi* ceremony both in time and spirit, and also in the method of observance! Women mourned, because men slew the god so cruelly, ground his bones in a mill and then scattered the pieces to the wind. An agricultural myth pure and simple! Yet if, in the second century, Adonis were declared to be a mythical personage as he is now found out to be by such an eminent mythologist as Frazer, the worshippers would certainly call him 'mad'. We trust,

Dramatic representations supply materials for historicisation.

this will prove exactly the case with Jesus, remembering that what was madness in the second century is a verified truth to-day. However, there is no doubt that this Adonis festival had a moulding hand, partly if not wholly, on the Easter celebrations of the dead and risen Christ. A grove of the Syrian Lord, Adonis, Jerome tells us, was still to be found at Bethlehem, the traditionary birth-place of Jesus. Adonis being a corn-god, Bethlehem would be his most fitting dwelling place, as *Bethlehem* means "the House of Bread" (p. 346). The reason need not now be repeated why Jesus was made to say, "I am the bread of life" (*Jn.* 6[35] and ffg). On the other hand, Antioch was the stronghold of Adonis worship, where the death of the God was annually celebrated with great pomp, and at this Antioch Christianity obtained its first success. The deduction is obvious.

Bethlehem the pre-Christian seat of Adonis.

So is Antioch.

d. Phrygian Attis

Originally Attis was a Priest-victim who slew himself for the good of the world, ensuring fertility. The priest and the god, bearing the same name, were identified. Latterly, instead of killing himself, he drew his blood. Afterwards a pig was substituted, and the animal was regarded as the god, as is the case with the Paschal lamb. The ceremonies were closely connected with the sacred Cybele-stone at Pessinus—Cybele, the mother of the gods who was, in the Christian mythology, worshipped as Virgin Mary. Jesus had scant regard for his mother (*Mt.* 12[46-50] ; *Mk.* 3[31-35] ; *Lk.* 8[19-21] ; *Jn.* 2[1]). So Mary's elevation to divinity does no follow from the Bible accounts, but it indicates some foreign influence, *viz.*, that of the current cults. It was inevitable from the circumstances. Else, Christianity could not hold its own against the rapturous devotion to Isis or Cybele (S. pp. 86, 307).

Cybele turned into Virgin Mary.

In its Roman version the five days' rite of Attis took place at the spring equinox, the forerunner of the Easter. The festival began with the tying of the effigy of a *young man* ("Jesus died young" on the "tree") to the pine tree. Mourning and burial were parts of the ceremonials. Then resurrection was celebrated. Attis is also a corn-God, meaning "very fruitful"—killed in the effigy of the priest-king. The resurrection followed as usual. Allen from Mr. Lawrence Gomme's *Village Community* draws very close and detailed parallels of all these festivals with the "Orgiastic God-making festival" of Pátráj of Southern India. Very striking resemblances they are ! (*See Idea of God*, pp. 313-314).

Attis was to Phrygia as Adonis to Syria, like the latter the former is also a vegetation God. On the vegetable side Attis is identified with the pine tree, and on the animal side, with the pig. Sometimes a bull was substituted in the ceremonies. Like that of Adonis "the story of his sufferings, death and resurrection was interpreted as the ripe grain wounded by the reaper, buried in the granary, and coming to life again when it is sown in the ground" (p. 353).

Detailed accounts from *Golden Bcugh.*

The legend says that his Virgin mother conceived him by putting a ripe almond in her bosom. If not the *Holy Ghost* the almond represents the Spirit of the Fatherhood of all things. Of course, "such tales of virgin mother are relics of an age of childish ignorance" (p. 347). In one account he was killed by a boar. The other account says, he unmanned himself and bled to death under a pine tree ("made themselves eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake". Mt. 19[12].) Death and resurrection were observed in the following manner. On March 22nd an effigy of Attis was tied to the stem of the pine tree. This was in reminiscence of killing by hanging from a tree (Crucifixion ?). The effigy was a later substitute only. Formerly a living person represented the divine being and *a man was actually sacrificed.* So, at the third day's ritual (24th March) blood was also offered profusely, the second day's consisting in the blowing of trumpets. The image was then laid in a sepulchre, mourned, and buried. Mourning consisted also in fasting from certain articles of food. "Or the fast may possibly have been a preparation for a sacramental meal" (p. 350).

Virgin mother.

Blood offerings.

Sacramental meal.

Then at night the sorrow of the worshippers was turned into joy. The tomb was opened exactly as it was afterwards copied in the Christian legend, but the God was not found there. He had risen from the dead and the priest whispered in their ears the glad tidings of salvation. This résurrection was a promise to the votaries that they too would triumph over the corruption of the grave. "The death and resurrection of Attis," remarks Dean Inge, "was regarded as a sacrament and pledge of human immortality. The worshippers sang: "Take courage, ye initiated, because the god is saved: to you also will come salvation from your troubles" (*Plotinus*, vol i, p. 42).

Empty tomb.

Resurrection the pledge of salvation and immortality.

However, on the morrow, that is, on the 25th day of March, the vernal equinox day, the divine resurrectien was celebrated with the wild out-burst of jubilation. It may, by the way, be remarked that the date allies the ritual with some sun-myth observance. Apart from these public rites, some secret and mystic ceremonies were performed which probably included a sacramental meal and a baptism of blood. The water baptism is only a civilised substitute for it. In the sacrament the communicant was to eat out of a drum and drink out of a cymbal—the orchestral instruments being somehow identified with the God. This reminds us of the Gitā verse—ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविः etc. Jesus was speared when both blood and water came out, being symbolical of baptism and Eucharist (*Jn.* 19[34]). In the baptism a consecrated bull was stabbed with a consecrated spear, and the worshipper was wholly bathed from head to foot with blood. When he emerged, he was adored by his fellows as one "born again to eternal life", with all his sins washed away. At Rome the new birth and the remission of sins were carried out on the Vatican Hill where St. Peter's now stands. And from here the barbarous system spread throughout the Roman Empire. Is not the reason now clear why the new *regime* of the new birth, and of the remission of sins was located on the same spot "where many inscriptions relating to the rites were found when the church [St. Peter's] was being enlarged in 1608 or 1609?" (pp. 351-352). The name only changed, the thing remained. We may condemn the savagery, but we cannot forget the debt we owe it. Time passes on, man becomes more and more refined, wine is substituted for blood in the Eucharist, the saying remaining: "Take, this is my blood", and water is substituted for blood in the baptism. But we have not ceased to express ourselves by the self-same terms *i. e.*, remission of sins by the blood of the sacrificed God—the relic of an immemorial savagery is present there all the same (Vide S. p. 78.)

Vatican Hill, the centre of purification by blood in Attis-myth.

Surely, when Christianity moulded itself into a creed, it popularised itself by incorporating into its very body the mysteries of the then popular religions of Attis, Adonis etc. These religions inculcated a dead and resuscitated God whose triumph over death was prophetic of man's deliverence from the power of the grave. The new religion was only a populariser of an old mystic cult. Its success was due to the fact that when the old Gods were being disbelieved, it

Mimicking the old is the secret of Christian success.

proceeded by substituting the legend as historical. Sometimes it succeeded in pushing its way onwards on the ground of its resemblance to the old—its advantage lying in its being more concrete and more definitely historicised, though full of anachronisms.

The worship of Cybele together with that of Attis was adopted by the Romans in 204 B. C.—a gift of the East to Europe. The worship could be performed only by the emasculated priest. So the meaning of Jesus' saying in *Matt.* 19[12] is clear. And Friedlander has interpreted the verse in this sense (*Jewish Sources*, p. 175). It will not do to take it metaphorically. The authorised version of the Bible is misleading as in many other points. Moffat's translation concludes: "Let any one practice it for whom it is practicable". *The Twentieth Century New Testament* is more clear: "Some men, it is true, have from birth been disabled for marriage, while others have been disabled by their fellow-men, and others again have disabled themselves for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven". This translation bars all figurative interpretations. Is not this kingdom then the kingdom of Cybele and Attis camouflaged? Dr. Meyer in his commentary of *Matthew* vol. ii, p. 29, (cp. also *The Century Bible*, *Matthew* p. 288, and Dr. James Morison's Commentary on *Matthew* p. 336) is pleased to observe: "It is wellknown that from a misunderstanding of the meaning of the passage Origen was led to castrate himself". Who misunderstands—Meyer or Origen? Historical criticism makes astounding revelations.

"Made eunuch of Gods"—not figurative, actual Cybelian practice passing on to Christianity.

Considered from the practice of the church in Gaul, Christ's resurrection coincided exactly with the resurrection of Attis. The inference appears to be inevitable that the passion of Christ must have been alternately (of course, if Christ is taken to be an historical person) referred to that date in order to harmonise with an older festival of the spring equinox. And this is not a plight with the birth-date only. Not only the season but the localities also resemble. The places which celebrated the death of Christ at the Spring equinox were Phrygia, Gaul, and apparently Rome, and these are the very regions in which the worship of Attis either originated or struck deepest root (p. 360).

Attis cult bodily borrowed.

e. Persian Mithra.

Mithraism, Gnosticism and Christianity apealed strongly to the wants and desires of the time. All alike were somewhat eclectic in character. "All came to the Greek and Roman world from the mystic

east" (Allen, p. 395). Which of the three was to conquer in the end might have seemed at one time extremely doubtful The ultimate triumph of Christianity was by no means a foregone conclusion. The religion of Jesus owed its success to what may be called *chance* for want of any better scientific term. "If Constantine or any other shrewd military chief had happened to adopt the symbols of Mithra or Abraxas instead of the name of Christ, it is quite conceivable that all the civilised world [Is civilization a monopoly of Europe ?] might now be adoring the mystic divinity of the three hundred and sixty-five emanations, as sedulously as it actually adores the final theological outcome of the old Hebrew Yahweh" (Ibid).

Success of Christianity due to mere chance.

The religion of the Great Mother was only one of a multitude of similar oriental faiths which in the later days of Paganism spread over the Roman Empire. Herein lies the desideratum for the substitution of the worship of Virgin Mary, the *mother of God*, as the then European peoples were imbued with the idea of this kind of worship.

Desideratum of a Mother-Goddess. S. p. 86.

From Golden Bough.

Among the gods of eastern origin, the old Persian deity Mithra was one of the most prominent whose monuments throughout the Empire testify to the popularity of his worship. It bears striking resemblances to Christianity for which the early Christian doctors made the prospective plagiarism of the arch plagiarist, the devil, responsible (S. pp. 296-297.) Because the Mithraism is older of the two, and, into the bargain, a deadly rival "combining a solemn ritual with aspirations after moral purity and a hope of immortality." Christianity was in such a sore strait that it had to borrow the date of the nativity of the rival God. In the Julian Calendar the 25th December was reckoned to be the winter solstice, the birth-day of the Sun-God Mithra. Because on that day the sun begins to increase in power and the day to lengthen. The solemn ritual of the nativity in Syria and Egypt consisted in the retirement of the priests into some inner shrine from which they emerged at midnight with the loud cry : "The Virgin has brought forth ! The

Mithraic moral purity and hope of immortality.

25th December, the birth date of Mithra too.

light is waxing!" The image of an infant was presented to the worshippers as the new-born Sun. Who may this virgin probably be? She is said to be the Heavenly Goddess. Then, she is surely Aditi of the Hindu conception—Aditi or the Sky. Can she not be the constellation Virgo, *Kanyá* or *Durgá*, the symbol of the universal reproductive energy! At the midnight of 25th December, *Virgo* just appears at the horizon, and at the midnight the day begins. However, this is the birth of Mithra, the unconquered Sun. Thorburn (in pp. 196 and 256 the name has been misprinted as Thorborn) quotes the Armenian historian Elisaeus: "The God Mithra was born of a woman", but contends that there is no text proving Mithra's virgin birth. What on earth is then the meaning of *born of a woman*? Are not all men so born? How to interpret the statement: "Virgin has brought forth"? Dr. Thorburn is one of those awakened sleeper who will not risk enlightenment; at least, will not admit it.

Solar myth of Mithra's birth.

The gospels are judiciously silent about the birth-day of their hero. But in a biography, to mention this is the clear duty of a biographer, its omission betraying its mythical character. So the Church was driven from post to pillar for a date. At first 6th January was decided upon. Afterwards it was transferred to 25th December—a legacy from Mithraism too. That is, when Christianity replaced Mithraism, the Mithraic God only appeared in another name—not the Unconquered Sun but the Sun of righteousness, not the sun, but the Maker of the Sun, as Augustine would have it. "The Mithraic Christians actually continued to celebrate Christmas Day as the birth day of the Sun, despite the censures of the Pope; and their Sunday had been adopted by the supplanting faith" (p. 332). As is the case with birth, so with death and resurrection together with the rituals thereof. These were all borrowed from another prominent God, Attis, who combined in himself the characters of divine Father and divine Son, and whose stronghold, as already pointed out, was at the Vatican Hill before the Christian era. What sort of an historical person is that *great man* whose birthday is to be borrowed from one mythical God, and the death to be referred to that of another. What are Christan festivals? "The festival of St. George in April has replaced the ancient Pagan festival of the Parilia; that the festival of St. John the Baptist has succeeded to a heathen Midsummer festival of water; that the festival of Assumption of the Virgin in August has ousted the festival of Diana: that the feast of All Souls

Birth, death and festivals borrowed from older religions.

in November is a continuation of an old heathen feast of the dead." (p. 360). Nativity and Easter have already been shown to be borrowed. So it is not unreasonable to conclude that Christianity itself is a continuation, or a camouflage or transformation or, at least, the synthesis of old religions.

From *Pagan Christs.*

It might have been thought sufficient by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (9th Edition) to devote only a column to the cult of Mithra as against hundreds of pages devoted to the books of the Bible. Yet it is well-known that Mithraism was the chief rival of Christianity for a couple of centuries or more, and it was the most wide-spread of the religious organisations, of the Roman Empire. Only difference is that Christianity was better organised. In Roman England, and Rome held her sway over England for three hundred years, there has been found no sign of the Christian faith, but one finds such monuments to Mithra as: "To the God, best and greatest, invincible Mithra, Lord of Ages." If Mithraism failed, it failed on economical and political grounds. It makes absolutely no difference between the two as personalised abstractions (p. 281). As personifications, the Christ was humanised in a most literal way. The gospellers attempted a literal story, as a concrete deity would appeal to the intellect of the multitude. That redounded to the advantage of Christianity.

Mithraic monuments in England.

The Mithra-cult originated in the Vedic deity Mitra, a name of the Sun-God—though in the battle of words the name passed into the back-ground in India, while it survived in Persia. In India another name of the same deity, I mean Vishnu, predominated. Here, at least in Bengal, the Mitra worship is still practiced by our women-folk in the name of *Itu-pujá* (*Mitra—Mitu—Itu*) in the month of Agraháyana, virtually December. If the precession of the equinoxes be taken into consideration, there is nothing to be surprised at if it is found to correspond to the ancient equivalent of the 25th December.

***Mitra*-worship in Bengal.**

1. Mithra is the slayer of the enemies of his worshippers. A parallel to this can easily be culled from the saying of the Gospel to the effect that "the wrath of God abideth on him" who is not the worshipper of the Son (*John* 3[36]).

2. Mithra like Christ is created by, but co-equal with, the Supreme.

3. Mithra was honoured equally with Ahura-Mazda, as the Son with the Father in Christianity. Artaxerxes 'prays for their conjoint protection'. Mithra assimilates to himself the idea of the *Logos*—who

for the Babylonians is a separate God, Nabu the rival of Merodach, but is later bracketed with him as his son (pp. 291-292).

4. Mithra is "actually named the *Mediator*, and figuring to the devout eye as humane and beneficent God, nearer to man than the Great Spirit of Good, a Saviour, a Redeemer, eternally young, son of the Most High, and preserver of mankind from the Evil One" (p. 294).

Jesus the Saviour is Mithra renamed.

5. Mithra is a double-sexed deity as the Anointed in Christianity (see *Supra* p. 167).

6. Mithra too had his Virgin and ascetics.

7. He too descended to Hades. All Sun-Gods must do so. Even the solar Samson of the Semitic myth did it (vide the Legend of Samson by Steinthal). The descent to Hades indicates that the God after being slain passes to the underworld. But the God dies to *rise again*. It is a solar myth of universal application. What does it mean, then? Is it ordinary sunset or sunrise? Or does it typify the more striking phenomena of the sun's going down at the autumnal equinox to rise again at the vernal? One might suggest the sun's total disappearance in the winter and its reappearance in the summer as witnessed in the arctic regions. Whatever it may mean, it is a myth pure and simple. One is at liberty to spiritualise it.

Descent to Hades.

8. Christianity did not overthrow but did only absorb Mithraism. The Church did not fail to destroy the books thereof. Even the treatise of Father Julius Firmicus "is mutilated at a passage (v) where he seems to be accusing Christians of following Mithraic usages". (p. 310 f. n.)

9. Firmicus also informs us that the devil imitated the Cross of Christ. Why? Because the familiar Christian symbol of lamb represents Christ as carrying a cross by one forefoot. Does not Mithra as the Lord Aries (Lamb) carry the cross-shaped sword of that particular Sign? The Lamb as a God-symbol among early Christians was sacrificed in the Paschal mystery in imitation of the Mithraists who, like the Christians later on, had observed the rite of symbolical eating of a God's image. The actual eating of a lamb in the Church-mysteries is in record. The flagrancy of the parallelism led a general council, as late as at the 7th century, to taboo portraying Christ as a lamb, but the fiat has been ineffectual. The symbol still obtains. The Christian figure of the lamb-bearing good shepherd is likely an imitation of Mithra or Mercury (Vivian, p. 107) carrying the animal on his shoulder.

Cross.

Christ as Lamb is Mithra transformed.

10. It appears from the Avesta that Mithra is 'the Word'. Emanuel Deutsch opines (*Literary Remains*, p. 50) that the *Metatron* of the Talmud, the equivalent of Plato's *Idea*, Philo's *Logos*, the Kabbalists' *World of Aziluth*, the Gnostics' *Sophia* and Plotinus' *Nous*, was 'most probably nothing but Mithra'.

11. Even the Christian theologians would admit that the Gods Ahura-Mazda, Shraosha ("The Holy One") and Mithra constituted Trinity as a parallel to that of Christianity, though an earlier one.

The idea of Jesus and Peter as "stone" or "rock" is Mithraic.

12. Mithra was associated with a mystic rock—"The rock from which the God comes." So we now feel no difficulty in tracing the source of Jesus a "living stone" (1 *Peter* ii$^{1-5}$) or a spiritual stone (1 *Cor.* 10^{1}), and also of Peter as "this stone" (*Matt.* 16^{18}). Vide P. C. p. 317. The Mithraic *Pater Patrum*, the supreme pontiff of Mithra at Rome, assumed the symbols of the God. So, when the legend assigned his chair to Peter as the "chair of St. Peter", the attributes of Jesus as the Key-bearer and Rock were necessarily transferred to Peter—the Christian pontiff, the *Papa* of Rome. It is evidently a transformation only. Peter the founder of the Roman See is a mere myth. According to Schmiedel Peter was never at Rome. The chair contains signs of its Mithraic origin stamped on its very body—the zodiacal signs are there. And the fisherman ? The Mithraic zodiac begins with Aquarius. These coincidences can not be accidental.

13. Mithra was cave-born. Though the gospels hold that Jesus was born in a stable, Justin's *Trypho*—(in p. 215, the *Trypho* has been wrongly ascribed to Origen) and Origen's *Celsus* explicitly give out that he was born in a cave. Of course, the stable allies him with another Saviour God, Dionysos. Both the newborn babes were adored by shepherds with offerings of first fruits. However, curiously enough, Jerome stood aghast finding, in his day, the cave at Jerusalem, sacred as the birthplace of Jesus, used on the 25th December festival by the Sun-worshippers.

14. This Virgin-born Saviour and Raiser of the Dead, whose mother miraculously conceived him from the seed of Zaruthastra, was buried in the rock-tomb, and was resurrected from there. Was not a rock-tomb improvised for the crucified Jesus too ? See *Matthew* 27^{60} ; *Mark* 15^{46} ; *Luke* 23^{53}. *John* just avoids the reference being, by this time, too conscious of its origin and the baneful consequence of its incorporation (S. p. 294). Plagiarism stares the Bible on the face.

15. The child-God conception is Mithraic also. We find it in the Krishna-cult too. It is a mystic idea of universal acceptance. "In the Mithraic movement we have the figure of the tree overshadowing the new-born child even as it does in the early Christian sculptures" (p. 322.)

Child-God.

16. The Virgin Mother (Madonna) is associated with Mithraism also.

17. The trait of drinking wine, though more appropriately influenced by Dionysiac mysteries, is also a point of contact with Mithraism. So the Eucharist of bread and wine is, in all likelihood, a conscious assimilation from the Mithraic mysteries too. As pointed out already it was in vogue in the pre-Christian Jewry.

18. The midnight services of the early Christians were introduced from the soli-lunar midnight worship of the Mithraists, "there being no basis for the orthodox notion that these secret meetings were due to fear of persecution. Their *myazd* or *mizd*, or sacred cake, was preserved in the *mass*, which possibly copied the very name." (p. 332)

Midnight services and *Mass.*

19. The doctrine of purgatory came from the Mithraists. Peter, the bearer of the heavenly keys; Jesus as "I am the door" by which any man can "go out and go in" (*John* 10[9]); and the Christian sculptures representing the story of Jesus and Peter and the cock-crowing—are Mithraic also. The *cock* is a symbolic bird of the Sun-God in the Mithraic monuments.

20. Christians are wont to make much of the text: "What doth it avail you if you gain the whole world but lose your *soul*." They think Christ revolutionised human society "by propounding and expounding this tremendous question" (*The Universalist Leader* as quoted by *The Indian Messenger*, 26. 10. 26.) Do they ever take the trouble of finding out its original? Says the Ávesta: "He has gained nothing who has not gained the *soul*: He shall gain nothing who shall not gain the soul." But what of the fond Christian hope that perchance the Mithraists might be found to be the imitators? The evidence of the early church-fathers forms a formidable barrier to allow any such easy escape. We have already pointed out (S. p. 343) that these *rishis* of the church finding the priority of Mithraism unshakable complained that the devil anticipated the Christian mysteries. I quote one more authority, perhaps the most simple of the lot. Justin Martyr says: "When I hear that Perseus was begotten of a

"Soul" and "whole world."

virgin, I understand [this must be the understanding of a veritable grandam] that the deceiving serpent counterfeited also this." So the theory of borrowing by the Mithraists holds no water.

Comparative Evaluation

Mithraism was introduced into Rome by Cilician pirates who were formerly soldiers in the employ of Asian rulers, and whom the Roman conquest threw on their own resources. Pompey put them down, many of whom he took under his patronage. Mithraism being mainly a religion of soldiers looked askance on women. So there is an absolute lack of a donatress in Mithraism. This was found to be one of its most distressing handicaps when it came to a grip with Christianity. Its disadvantage was also partly due to the spirit of asceticism which, however, several Christian sects did not forget to copy. This lack of feminine help was an economical drawback of the most serious type when the comparative popularity of the religions is taken into consideration. Christianity which, with its larger financial developments, instituted the practice of systematic alms-giving, thus drew a motley crowd of sexes to its fold. Otherwise, morally Mithraism could give points to Christianity. This is admitted even by the Christian historian Hausrath: "What won sympathy for the worship of Mithra in Rome was the fundamental ethical thought that the deity is set in constant strife with evil. The pure and chaste God of light, of whom no myth related anything but virtue and strife against evil, won many hearts from sin-stained Olympus. Above all, the most ideal characters in the history of imperial Rome gave their protection to the Mithra-worship." (*History of the New Testament Times : Times of the Apostles*).

Mithraism anti-feminine.

Economically inferior to Christianity.

But not morally.

The esotericism of Mithraism acted as a clog in its wheel when pitted against Christianity. There was, no doubt, an esoteric grade in Christianity also. But a wholly esoteric institution, as Mithraism was, could never secure the sympathy of the ignorant masses. Mithraism was a sort of free-masonry and not a public organisation.

Esoteric difficulty.

The death of Julian was looked upon as an omen, and in a superstitious age like that of the first Christian years, the Mithraic Emperor's death came as a death-warrant of the cult. It was not its over-throw but its absorption in Christianity. The name was lost but the thing

Death of Julian the death-blow.

remained. What's in a name? The rose in another name will smell as sweet. Yes, Christianity triumphed by assimilating Mithraic usages. "The higher mysteries of communion, divine sacrifice, and resurrection, as we have seen, were as much Mithraic as Christist, so that a Mithraist could turn to the Christian worship and find his main rites unimpaired, lightened only of the burden of initiative austerities, stripped of the old obscure mysticism, and with all things turned to the literal and the concrete, in sympathy with the waning of knowledge and philosophy throughout the world," (pp. 331-332). Christ was only given a more concrete shape than Mithra, that is all. One of the causes of the Buddhist success was Gautama's adopting the middle path by lightening the the rigour of earlier asceticism. And this is not altogether a new phenomenon in the progress of the world's religious history. This happened exactly in the same way in the case of Vaishnavism. When Vaishnavism as a full-fledged cult came to the forefront, it met its rival in S'aivism which was then in occupation of the field. In rivalry the latter was worsted, and Vaisnavism, absorbing all its merits, drove it to the wall as Christianity did to Mithraism (See Bhagavat Kumar Sástri's *The Bhakti-Cults in Ancient India*).

Transformation of Mithraism into Christianity.

So S'aivism and Vaishnavism.

Yet this may not seem to many a very cogent argument. Yes, something more was actually working for the dethronement of Mithra. There was a more tangible instrument. We have already said that Christianity was better organised on a republican basis, and it utilised its strength to the fullest extent. "The Christian Church renewed the spell of imperial Rome, and brought actual force to make good intellectual weakness. And so we read that the Mithraic worship was by Christian physical force suppressed in Rome and Alexandria, in the year 376 or 377, at a time when, as the inscriptions show, it was making much headway" (P. C., p. 330).

Final overthrow of Mithraism is due to persecution.

CHAPTER XX.

PRE-CHRISTIAN JESUS-CULTS

a. Relation between myths and cults

Dr. Adolf Harnack, a pugilist against the myth-theory, takes the birth-story of Christ as "not a mythology, but a lofty legend comprising historical and religious facts and experiences in very fine images", though it is not denied that all the limbs of that story, such as child-bearing of *Mary* at *Bethlehem* during the *census*; *shepherds, angels* and double *annunciation* of the birth of the Saviour by them, together with that of the Baptist, the massacre of the children, coming from *Egypt* and the presentation of the child in the temple—have been found out to be old myths bodily carried over to the new story. Some of these tales have been shown to be unhistorical and some directly borrowed from the Buddha legends. Religious facts they are, but more imaginary than historical. As to the *star and the wise men from the East*, the truth is out, even through the very attempt to suppress it. Says Prof. Harnack : "Here we have an ancient myth reproduced and applied to Jesus Christ". In order to divert our attention from this damaging confession, the meaning of which burrows far deeper into his position, Prof. Harnack here gives us a bit of history. He makes his case far worse than he is aware of by stating that at this time much richer religions of the East entered the Greco-Roman world. They claimed many followers, but bowed before Christianity. "History has fulfilled and confirmed the myth [certainly Jesus-myth !] in a wonderful way. The oriental religions," ejaculates this Berlin Professor to soothe his lacerated heart, "brought gifts to the Christian, and then paled before its light." (*Witnesses*, p. 161 f. n.) This is history, but how does it help the doctor's theory? The truth so frankly given out here, if interpreted in the lime-light of history, tells us in so many words that Christianity was formed out of elements supplied by oriental religions treating of Saviour-Gods, and when a founder to the new religion was needed by the stress of circumstances, (S. pp. 151-152) this story of Jesus was introduced in the form of an allegory. And until Christianity had triumphed, it could not have been incorporated with his life even as a fact of allegorical history. Otherwise, it would remain a myth, pure and simple. Admitting this much

Birth story, not mythology but legend !

Harnack's *hysteron proteron*.

as he is evidently doing, Harnack, with what face we can not make out, believes it to be the part of the life-story of an historical personality. Blindness, thy name is religious partizanship ! To explain the episode in any other way is to commit *hysteron proteron* of a most glaring type. Methods to scientifically interpret myths were not available to the theologian. Now people know better. Out of cults or customs myths grow. This is a universal principle, and is in its entirety substantiated by Dr. Frazer from evidences not available to a man of lesser calibre. But he too has withheld his hand from applying this induction to Christianity. Nobody can account for the reason why this only exception is to be made of a universal principle. Surely his Christian proclivities have stood in the way of giving his finding its due. His Christian self may have unconsciously misled him in spite of himself. This is one other example how our mind is warped from its natural course even by unconscious religious bias. The conflict between science and religion has not ceased. It is a burdensome legacy from the dogmatic, and for the matter of that the so-called *revealed*, religion.

Frazer's *volte face*.

A cult or custom does not, at the outset, require a god for worship. The deity develops from the cult. Our *Purva-Mimánsá* raised a vigorous protest against connecting any deity with *sacrifices*. A sacrifice, say the *soma-yajna*, was only a particular ceremony consisting of certain rites and observances performed with a peculiar set of *mantras*. The idea of a god connected with it never arose at this stage. But the stage soon came when the blank was to be filled up. And when the god came he was no other than the *soma-devatá*, identical even in name in this case with the *soma* juice, the principal article of that sacrifice. Round this all other ingredients were entwined, and all these things together suggested the traits of character the god was afterwards endowed with. And naturally a myth originated. The deity is really an abstraction from, and a re-christening of, the cult. So there was nothing strange that Soma (Bacchus), though himself a god, would be offered to gods. In Greece there was a festival of bull-sacrifice. People ate the flesh and drank the blood of the sacrificed animal. Latterly, the god Dionysos was introduced into the festival with the myth attached to his person that he once incarnated himself as a bull. But that is a wrong interpretation. The God was evolved out of of the bull-sacrifice festival and, therefore, he was the bull-god and not conversely. The custom still prevails among the Nágás that a human sacrifice is to be made when a member of the tribe actually enters the

First cult, then myth

life of a warrior. No god or spirit is invoked or interceded. It is simply a binding rite. If a god is introduced, a story will have to be manufactured. And that is what we mean by a *myth*.

b. General observations

At the end of the 18th century the French scholars Dupuis and Volney proposed a myth-theory drawing a parallel between the Christian and the Pagan myths, and showed the astronomical origin of some of the Jesuine stories. Strauss, on the other hand, still clinging to a nucleus of history, explained the mythical character of the nine-tenths of the gospel account and that from the Jewish prophecies and dogmas only (S. pp. 194, 213, 272). He, though more fiercely attacked in his time than the myth-theory of to-day, is now reckoned as the rescue-home of the lost hope of the historicity of Jesus. But Bruno Bauer chalked out a career of his own. An unbiassed seeker of truth, he launched his own barge of enquiry in search of a biography, but, finding no anchor anywhere, was stranded on the myth-theory. At the present moment three master-minds—Dr. Arthur Drews, Prof. W. B. Smith, and the Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, among others equally distinguished—are exploring the whole field with the search-light of their eminent scholarship. But they started from different standpoints (S. p. 196). Drews labours in the interest of theistic religion. Smith started from the internal evidence of the Biblical stories. Robertson proceeds along the lines of comparative mythology and anthropology, sociology and economics. And they, curiously enough, have corroborated one another by way of confirming the theory. There is nothing to be surprised at it. Most myths bear two or more interpretations as myths are multifocal. It is to Robertson and Smith, more than to others, that we owe the conception of the evolution of Jesus-worship from pre-Christian Jesus-cults. They have independently of each other worked out their respective thesis from two different standpoints and their conclusion has been substantially ratified by other scholars. "The real basis of Christian community", observes Mr. Whittaker, "I take to have been, as Mr. Robertson holds, a cult which was connected with a Jesus or Joshua long since conceived as of divine status" (*The Origins of Christianity*, p. 24). The basic idea of the myth originally lay in an esoteric sarificial rite which had its exoteric popular side also. This is Robertson's starting point. When the rite was presented in the form of a popular drama, it took a definite shape with the help of similar reli-

Evolution of myth-theory.

How Christmyth developed.

Pre-Christian Jesus-cult the starting point.

gious stories current in the Hellenistic world. It underwent modifications as it grew in strength and volume. This is a fact which is not contested even by those who have not yet seen their way to accept the myth-theory in *toto.* Grant Allen, a no mean authority on such matters, remarks, in *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, that Christianity "embraces in itself elements which doubtless lingered on in secluded corners more or less among the mass of the people even in Judæa itself, though discountenanced by the adherents of the priestly and official Yahweh-worship, but which were integral parts of the popular and even the recognised religion of the whole of northern Syria" (p. 364).

However, the myth-theory is being assailed from all sides, and its opponents have all agreed in forgetting that in any historical research the evidential value of the tradition is the feeblest. Therefore the biographical school is the least satisfactory, as it eliminates the miracles and self-contradictions from the narrative, but forthwith goes to affirm a supernatural being for whom contradictions are allowed. Its naive reply to the question—what is the ground of historicity—is what Dr. Drews has shown to be a *vicious circle*. Their only argument is that the narrative can but belong to an "unique and effulgent personality". For certain logic is with us, so also the history of the progress of the Biblical criticism. Is not the heretic of yesterday hailed as the very stronghold of today's scholarly orthodoxy? Was not the exposure of the falsity of the "inspiration" doctrine—now most discredited of all the early theological dogmas—equally violently assailed? But the most unassailable fort is our method. We proceed by showing how the cult arose, and how it developed under the then circumstances, connecting the links by cause and effect as we proceed. No man, whose head and heart are in the right place, will withhold his assent from Robertson when the latter says that "in its least satisfying aspect the myth-theory is a scientific substitution for what is wholly dissatisfying—the entirely unhistorical construction furnished by the gospels" (*The Jesus Problem*, p. 22).

Opposition to myth-theory a *vicious circle*.

Strength of myth-theory its *genetic* method.

It is admitted on all hands that at the time of the Christian era the atmosphere was surcharged with the Messianic ideal, and it was not confined within the four walls of Judæa only. "It is unnecessary to say here," observes the Rev. R. J. Campbell, "that the Christ-idea had swayed the Jewish thought, and even passed beyond Jewish bor-

Christ-idea not local.

ders, before the public appearance of Jesus" (*Jesus or Christ ?*). Much thinking is not required to affirm this much. Not only the idea in the abstract but the Sun-god Mithra in the most concrete form was already firmly installed in the hearts of men. Over and above, many kinds of secret worship were propagated by the dispersed Jews. This accounts for the anomaly why, inspite of the emphatic prohibition to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, it was so readily given them, and they too so readily accepted the Jewish Messiah, the son of David. From the *Acts* it appears that the apostles got hearty reception almost everywhere they went, and, in some places at least, they found organised congregations. This implies that the movement had already been in existence before any missionary visited the places. And Palestine was itself hellenised as well. "The religion of Israel showed an astonishing power", as Dr. Carpenter observes, "of absorbing alien elements, and providing itself with a variegated outfit of mythological ideas" (*Jesus or Christ ?*) If, on the other hand, we take into consideration the life-stories of the Egyptian God, Osiris, whom the Egyptians believed, centuries before the Christ, to have died, risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and compare them point by point, as we have done, with the gospel legends about Jesus, then there remains no doubt as to another symbolical meaning of the saying: "I called my son from Egypt" (vide *Addenda* infra). And if the Alexandrians threw themselves heart and soul into the arms of Christianity, it was because they got their own back *in toto*, or in slightly altered form which they in their own turn amply modified. (S. p. 85). After examining facts and figures of the first century before the Christian era coming down from the earliest periods, and after alluding to the legend of Buddha's leaving his home in heaven and being "born of a woman" on earth for the good of the world, Dr. Carpenter concludes: "So must the Messiah-to-be quit the scene of supernal glory to enter the ranks of humanity and become the deliverer of Israel, as well as the Lord of the heavenly powers. The elements of a Christology were all prepared. There was needed only a personality to which they could be attached" (*Ibid*).

Christian saviour a theological fabrication.

At this point Dr. Carpenter, on account of his Unitarian prepossession about the historicity of man-Jesus, has missed the significance of all his recollections. The Christology without his particular Christ was already complete in all its details. So if a Christ came in, he did so not as an actual agent to inaugurate a future movement to complete the chain of *historical evolution*, but he was thrust into the drama as the *logical finale*

of what had gone before. The personality was only found a desideratum for the edification of the uneducated masses and also for giving the movement a necessary fillip. When the will-to-believe is there, the object of belief is not far to seek. And there is no gainsaying the fact that imagination has played, and is still playing, a supreme part in turning the gospel-Jesus into the very Christ. The theologian himself, in another connection (*The First Three Gospels*, p. 136), has admitted that the Church in a way created "the sublime figure of the Christ." And this view is not an isolated one. Such an eminent authority as Otto Pfleiderer supports it. "The historical back-ground of the Gospel is", he speaks of *St. John* and *John* is based on other gospels, "constructed not so much from reminiscences of the life of Jesus as from experiences in the life of the Church of the second century." (*Primitive Christianity*, vol. iv, p. 21). Further on he ratifies this position by reiterating that "the anti-Jewish and supra-Jewish Christ of the Johannine Gospel does not belong to history, but is carried back from the developed consciousness of the Church of the second century into the life of Jesus" (p. 139). Dr. Carpenter in his *Johannine Writings* published just before his death admits this. This ultra-historical element in the life of Jesus is also emphasised by such an eminent orthodox scholar as Dr. Thomas Walker: "As regards the material of the Fourth Gospel, there is much that is either the author's own, or so much the author's own as to make it difficult in most cases to arrive at the original saying." He freely admits the "interest of Jesus" in the *XII Patriarchs* and the *Book of Enoch* (*Jesus and Jewish Teaching*, *p. 30*).

Johannine writings ultra-historical.

c. *Jesus* "God of the Hebrews", a holy name by which to adjure in the pre-Christian Jewry. The mystery is explained why Gospel Jesus was made *an exorcist*.

In the Gospel according to St. Luke, and in this Gospel only one finds that Jesus sent out the other contingent of seventy disciples (S. p. 179) on a mission tour—a mission absolutely without any spiritual significance. Because they returned and reported: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in thy name" (*Lk.* 10[17]). Verily, these myth-makers of the gospels, when taken on their face value, were simple superstitious people without pretension to any sort of culture. Spiritual culture they had none. Though they undertook to write on the kingdom of God, they would, in the last analysis, be found to possess very little idea of it, if

a mark of any the very high spiritual cognition were demanded of them (S. p. 119). If they had any conception of truths other than worldly, it mostly consisted of ghost-stories. Their ideal of power and glory culminated in the village physician—the wonder-worker of the country-side who healed by driving out sundry evil spirits from the diseased human body, as is still done by the Zulu witch-doctor in his own way. It is physically impossible for one to outstrip one's own shadow. So psychologically it is equally impossible to go beyond one's own notions of things. Naturally the Divine Teacher remains in their hands the ideal village physician. This is one invariable theme that consistently and persistently runs through the gospels from beginning to end. Jesus, wherever he goes, expels devils from those possessed. The gospellers could not conceive of a better vocation for the teacher, nor could the disciples improvise for themselves a more respectable mission-work. And these ghostly acts were performed in places previously visited neither by Jesus ("Whither he himself was about to come" *Lk.* 10), nor by his missionaries. Yet, through the name of *Jesus* devils were controlled by the disciples. And not by the diciples alone. John said : "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name: and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us". (*Mark* 9[38] and *Lk.* 9[49]).

Pre-Christian cult of exorcism dramatised.

If we are not to believe in such a miraculous feat as Válmiki having composed *Rámáyana* sixty thousand years before Ráma was born, then how can we believe that Jesus' name worked wonders in a place where he was not yet preached. If this interpretation be pressed upon us as literally true, it would be believing in a miracle and miracles we have abjured. Yet it is recorded in so many words that wherever the disciples went they found the people were quite acquainted with the practice of casting out devils in the name of *Jesus.* The disciples can not be credited with the invention of any new idea, nor do the gospellers themselves mean anything new. If on this point there arises any doubt, Jesus' reply to John would dispel it. He virtually forbade his disciples to cherish any sort of a distinction between the new kingdom and the old order, "for he that is not against us is for us". The whole affair, then, resolves itself into this : There was some kind of a pre-Christian Jesus-worship throughout the Jewry with the central practice of the expulsion of devils by the name of *Jesus* and this the gospels represent in a dramatic form (Vide *Witnesses*, p. 219 ; J. P. p. 91 ; H. J. p. 174). A man is deified—we see it very often done before our very eyes. But its reverse process may also be resorted to; as, for example, in the case

of the Old Testament Joshua. The hero of the gopsels is no doubt "साधकानां हितार्थाय ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना" So, when *humanised*, what role would most suit the *Jesus, God of the Hebrews*, in whose name the people were accustomed to cast out devils, than that of an exorcist? And that role the Jesus of the gospels has been made to play excellently well.

d. Proto-Christian Jesus-God *

Before we proceed any further we must stop to take note of the great exegetical controversy that has been raised over the interpretation of Biblical texts. The Revised Version by retranslating and recasting a large number of verses has hit the orthodox position on the head. The rivisers, themselves orthodox, have not hesitated to cancel some very important verses on which the central doctrine of trinity is based. And the orthodox standpoint does not count. It is neither fish nor flesh nor red-herring, being a conglomeration of all sorts of contradictions and discrepancies, historical, psychological and metaphysical. Apart from this we have got three distinct critical views advocated by three distinct schools of interpreters. In reply to the question: "Who is Jesus?" we get three distinctly articulated answers from men who have spent almost a lifetime in studying the historic foundations of Christianity—its original documents, languages, and criticisms of evidence. Some more, some less, but all have made this the devoted work of their life. The first answer is: Jesus is the very God, —*Yahweh worshipped under the name Jesus*—who has been humanised. This humanisation has been brought about mostly through the misunderstanding, primarily, of the propaganda, and, in the second place, of the Biblical texts. An objection to this view is raised by H. J. Rossington in his booklet, *Did Jesus Really Live?* (p 22), remarking that "the belief in Jehova's supremacy was too early established and too jealously

Three main currents of Biblical interpretation.

1. Jesus the very God.

Yahweh and Jesus synonymous.

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* As symbolically interpreted by Dr. Benjamin Smith in his *Ecce Deus.* On this author, "the learned and brilliant American", the following appreciative remark has been passed by the German critic, Wilhelm Von Schnehen in *The Open Court* 1912. He who seeks deeper insight into the Bible exegis must read Smith: "Whoever does so will then without question agree with me in the judgment that the American may confidently match himself in learning with every theologian of our day, and that in genius (*Geist*) he overtops them," and visits upon his opponents "an overthrow that is really annihilation." It is to be remembered that the compliment comes from proverbially self-conceited Germany, the land of theologians.

maintained to permit of any rival near the throne." The contention has no legs to stand upon, inasmuch as the plea of any the very strict monotheism is only a later prophetic battle-cry foisted on the earlier books by revision (S. pp. 305-306). "Renan's thesis", observes Mr. Robertson, "that a special bias to monotheism was set up in the early Semites by their environment is contradicted by all their ancient history, and is now abandoned by theologians" (P. C. p. 67). W. Robertson Smith's view also goes against Rossington's conclusion: "What is often described" he declares, "as the natural tendency of the Semitic religion towards ethical monotheism, is in the main nothing more than a consequence of the alliance of religion with monarchy" (*The Religion of Semites*, p. 74). Mr. Robertson has shown that the early Hebrew theism was neither very rigid, nor ethically very high. Nor does the question of rivalry come in at all. It is the question of worshipping Yahweh in another name. Proofs are not wanting in the Bible that the brotherhood of such a cult was a secret society and the secrecy was a prudential measure. Because the cult had to steer clear of the Scylla of official Judaism on the one hand, and the Charybdis of the state religion of Cæsar-worship* on the other. There was nothing unlikely in it. If a body of Bráhmas, having a fancy for the name *Hari*, form a brotherhood of their own to chant that name† of God and freely indulge in figurative and symbolical expressions which are allowed in our public places of worship only in a moderate degree and that under protest from the extreme purists, yet yielding their palm to none in their monotheistic and

So not non-monotheistic.

Hebrew monotheism an after-thought.

Hari and *Brahma* in the Bráhma Samaj.

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* "This institution of Cæsar-worship in the shape of a religious faith, believing in a saviour who was the representative of God on earth and the incarnation of all authority became the cement which rendered the foundation of the Roman Empire enduring for several centuries". (Paul Carus in *The Open Court*, 1910). It is a fact of history that the Jews resented this usurpation by the Cæsar of the honour and dignity of the Saviour, and therefore, as a counterblast, promulgated their own eschatological Christ. Now the early Christians were gradually able to pitchfork this Christ into that high position, when the successors of Augustus proved very little worthy of this ideal of a saviour, a god-man, a prince of peace (vide S. pp. 328-329).

† The name *Krishna* will also do, as

कृषिर्भूवाचकः शब्दो णश्च निर्वृतिवाचकः ।
तयोरैक्यं परं ब्रह्म कृष्ण इत्यभिधीयते ॥

Krishna is he from whom salvation comes.

non-idolatrous zeal, there would be nothing strange in it. Though not given to open propaganda they may privately persuade others to join them. Their unwillingness to give any handle to the extremists in the Samáj on the one hand, and their desire, on the other, to provide against the chance of the brotherhood being in any way indentified with the so many *Hari-bhakti Pradáyini Sabhás* (Associations promoting devotions to Hari) whose Hari's non-idolatrous character is not above suspicion, may lead to a certain amount of secrecy about their society, and in such societies naturally springs up some form of symbolical language not quite intelligible to the outsiders. This must have been the case with the cult of pre-Christian Jesus-worship that contributed so much to the development of Christianity.

The second answer comes mostly from the Christian Unitarians.

2. Jesus a mere man.

Jesus is a mere man afterwards deified. Being divested by historical criticism of all his divine appendages we find him a man again, pure and simple. The difficulty of the stand point is that deification is a process. For the culmination of the process, time is required. But sufficient time has not been allowed in this case. Jesus is a full-grown deity from the very beginning, being worshipped as the "Lord" even by his associates and colleagues. To proceed with the deification of a mere man we need the tradition left by a towering personality by whom his environments were extraordinarily impressed. But there is no sign in the gospels of any such impression (S. p. 189). Except in the land where it is usual for the people to exchange the older incarnation for a new-fangled one every now and then, the deification, as a natural process, does no begin with those (S. p. 138) by whom he is surrounded, however much they may be impressed. Human weaknesses that a man, however great, would necessarily betray from time to time, must not escape their notice. But these companions in the gospels never speak of him in terms of a personal friend as they must have done if they had to deal with *man*. They are made to speak of Jesus as a god from the beginning. The early Christian writings, both patristic and apologetic, including the *Acts*. The early writers such as Peter, Paul, and John, knew nothing of the human qualities which, if ever found at all, are interpolations (S. p. 154). From the general tenor it is evident that they deal with a divine being, and it is on the general tenor the verdict is based in a law court. Really, the human Jesus of liberal criticism is opposed to the purport of the New Testament,

And not very impressive for that.

The view untenable—against N. T.

3. Jesus a myth.

The third answer to the question i.e., Jesus is a myth, there being no room for him in history—all gods are mythical personages, not historical—has sent a thrill of sensation through the whole of the Christian world, dogmatic and liberal. The latter are more concerned, because theirs is a wholly fabricated edifice. However, the distinction between the first and the third positions is a distinction without a difference. Their difference is the difference of the methods of approach and orientation, but they both yield the same result, viz., the denial of the historicity of Jesus as a human personality.

1st and 3rd views coincide.

We have passed unmeasured strictures of ignorance and low culture on the gospel writers. We are not wholly and solely responsible for that. Our strictures hold good if the gospel texts are taken on their face-value which is pressed on us by the orthodox as well as most of the liberals. But Dr. Benjamin Smith, in *The Pre-Christian Jesus* and *Ecce Deus*, both the books being at first published in Germany for want of a publisher in England as well as in America, has altered it altogether. The state of Germany too was not better. In rejecting an article, on the subject, of a scholar a German editor said, "I do not wish to disturb the religious slumber of the people, i. e., न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।" Yes, as far as any reasoned unprejudiced presentation favourable to the radical contention is concerned, the boasted freedom of speech is well-nigh reduced to a mockery. And those regrets come "from high placed university professors and distinguished men of letters" of Germany, of Norway, of England, of Scotland, as well as of America. If Schmiedel undertook to publish Smith's book in German before its original in English found an opportunity to see the light, it was because that redoubtable Swiss Professor of Zurich understood it fully well, though unsuspected by his colleagues, that unless Smith were refuted the hope of an historical Jesus would be gone. Now it has nearly passed on to contemporary history what luck awaited Schmiedel's *Foundation Pillars*. And with the fate of these *Pillar Passages* (S. p. 229) the fate of the historicity of Jesus has already been sealed. But theologians lack not courage and prudence to accommodate themselves to a new inconvenient situation. And this is quite evident from the significant title of the article : "Is Belief in the Historicity of Jesus Indispensable to Christian Faith" published in the *American Journal of Theology* (1911) by the distinguished scholar, Mr. Mackintosh. Many others have followed him. But God fulfils himself in divers ways

Change of perspective necessary.

inscrutable to men. This German edition inspired Dr. Drews with unwonted zeal and enthusiasm in favour of the myth-theory and he wrote his memorable book *The Christ-myth* which "was like the broad wing of the wind suddenly smiting the smooth seatunic and ruffling it instantly into foam. All Germany was thrown into ferment. From peasant's hut to emperor's yacht, from Bier Garten to Cathedral, from ponderous tome to fluttering feuilleton all things became animated with his denial. Every month called for a new edition of his famous work which flew all over Europe and beyond the seas ; it was felt that for the first time in history the nerve of the great question concerning the origin and therewith, the nature of our Christian civilization had been touched." And his reply to the critics in his *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus* has smashed them all. (*Open Court*, 1912).

After a long series of Bible studies going back to his college days, Dr. Smith found out the utter impossiblity, from the ordinary standpoint, of explaining the cardinal facts of proto-Christianity, such as primitive worship of Jesus as God, the mission to the Gentiles, the extremely rapid diffusion of the propaganda,* the preaching of Paul, and the absence of the human personality † (i. e. the Jesus as fabricated by liberal theologians) from old Christian literature. (*Ibid*). Thus freeing the mind from the fixed notion of a purely human Jesus, he has reduced the study to two alternatives : Is Jesus the *humanised God or a deified man ?* There is no room for a third, as God incarnating himself in the form of man in the ordinary sense of the dogma has been relegated to the sphere of obsolete myths, at least for those who take the risk of thinking for themselves. The latter alternative also can be held as good as exploded, because the moral impression on which the deification is based is nowhere to be found in the gospel narrative. The foregoing pages have proved it to demon-

Deified man or humanised god ?

* There is a difference of opinions whether Christianity was propagated rapidly and if so what the reason was. Dr. Smith holds it was so because it was a monotheistic movement against the polytheistic idolatry of the heathen world which was toppling down to the ground. It is also a debated point whether official Judaism was monotheistic at all. Certain heresies might have been. Even Smith admits that the Judaic mind distinguishes between God very high and God Most High, and the Jewish faith accommodates a subordinate Being purely divine. 'Rapid diffusion' itself is a relative term and people may agree to differ.

† When Jesus was considered no longer a man but God Himself, the charge of harshness brought by Celsus was repelled by Origen, saying : Yahweh too was harsh. And Origen was the most alert-minded of the early Church Fathers.

stration. Biblical criticism has brought the case of the liberals to such a sorry pass that their man-Jesus is reduced to an "ignorant enthusiast —but one of many" according to the *eschatological theory* now in full feather and favour. Incorporation later on of some such enthusiast in the Bible story seems probable. *Luke* (24[21]) informs us that two disciples, after crucifixion, while wending their way from Emmaus to Jerusalem expressed their opinion thus : "But we trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." It was exactly in the same way that some years back such blind zealots in India entertained the hope of the speedy recovery of *Swaráj*

Every liberal has his own *Jesus-idea* drawn from his imagination. Dr. Smith observes : "The Jesus of orthodoxy is indeed a glorious being though without scriptural or other warrant. The Jesus of Renan is also not inglorious, though no more historically and far less logically warranted. The Jesus of Cheyne and Loisy and Wellhausen | and of Schmiedel, as one is tempted to add | is not only precisely as unwarranted, but is also weak, miserable, and functionless entirely superfluous on the stage of history explaining absolutely nothing, but blocking every otherwise satisfactory explanation, an utterly unmanageable fifth wheel to the car of critico-historical theory. Why such scholars should insist on retaining such a factor, after reducing its potency absolutely to zero is truely bewildering !" (*Ecce Deus*, pp 318-319). The liberal culls from the *jungle*, known as the gospels, any attribute which, according to him, well becomes the founder of Christianity, the logic being "whom the shoe fits, let him wear it." But it is forthwith contradicted by his neighbour, because the commodity does not exactly suit the latter's taste (vide Schweitzer's *Quest*). This is because no clear intelligible human characteristic of the imaginary personality is to be found in the gospels (S. p. 249). Even such an innocent but glorious quality as embodied in the verse "Father, forgive them" has been discarded as an interpolation. Jesus as a teacher has by the almost universal consensus of critical opinion been given up as a wholesale manufacture. Prof. Shirley Jackson Case of the University of Chicago in *The Historcity of Jesus* has laid aside the claim of "uniqueness." Such is also the case with Dr. Erich Klostermann, Professor of Theology in the University of Strassburg. He was invited to deliver a lecture on "The Latest Attack on the Historicity of Jesus." He told his audience pointblank that the "rusty weapons [i. e. the plea of "uniqueness" "uninventibility etc.] will have to be set aside in the corner", and "new and more efficient

Liberal's Jesus otiose.

The plea of *uniqueness* given up at last.

weapons will have to be forged." Also Schmiedel's Pillars are incapable of bearing the shock of the latest onesets (S. Ch. xii). But the Professor did not state what those doughtier weapons were with which to repel the adversaries. Of course, he was unable to do so. Most assuredly the dismayed audience thought within themselves : "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold ! thou hast blessed them altogether." (*The Open court*, 1913.) If age-long claims on behalf of Jesus have had to be cast away, it has been done on weighty grounds : because there was no other alternative. Not an iota of evidence is forthcoming from any quarter to justify the claim of an extraordinary personality. Yes, if the Christian movement is to be explained by a human personality, he must be extraordinary in all senses of the term. But on their own showing the Jesus-personality has been precipitated to an "ignorant enthusiast." The contemporary history too stands in the way of any such assumption. Josephus deals with John the Baptist minutely enough, but does not mention Jesus, "one greater than John" as the gospels would have it (See *Supra* p. 10).

Merely an "ignorant enthusiast."

Of course, the boasted Christian moral scruples here as elsewhere never hesitated to interpolate a necessary passage, as the *silence* of Josephus is fatal to any claim of historicity. The early Christians were aware of this dangerous omission and filled up the gap. However, critics both orthodox and liberal, not to mention the radical, have rejected it on several grounds. The context does not allow the passage there, and the phraseology smacks of a New Testament writer far down in the annals. The view we have taken is literally supported by Dr. Maurice Goguel in his *Jesus the Nazarene—Myth or History*. According to him "if the forged passage in B. xviii of the *Antiquities* be wholly removed the preceding and following paragraphs are in perfect connection with each other" (Robertson in L. G. April 1926). And Prof. Goguel is not a man to let slip an opportunity by which to justify historicity when the myth-theory is in the air. Moreover, as late as 250 A. D., Origen was not aware of the passage. And it is an established fact of history that the early Christians including the Fathers were beyond their depths to produce a scrap of historical evidence and therefore interpolated right and left. It was their favourite pastime (S. p. 90 f. n.). There is not a single reference in history that is moderately above suspicion. But the world is invited to stake its salvation on it. There is no reason why this gossipy chronicler would suppress this item of news, if historical. The motive would be quite the reverse. Christianity was "pernicious superstition" to

Josephus interpolated.

him. So its origin would be very gladly traced to a "crucified criminal," if there were the least historicity attached to it. The absence of any such reference in the writers, whose attitude would have prompted them to invent such a story, is proof positive against an historical founder of Christianity. Justus of Tiberias, a contemporary of Josephus, who like him was both a soldier and an historian. He hailed from the very district where Jesus was said have been born. He, like Josephus, wrote on "The Jewish Wars." In addition he wrote a "Chronicle of the Jewish Kings from Moses to Agrippa II." Both works are now lost, but they were read in the ninth century by Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, "who", adds Brandes, "expressed astonishment at finding them contain no more mention of Jesus than did the works of Josephus" (*Jesus : A Myth*, pp. 46-47). We can not comprehend the meaning of this astonishment. Really we are astonished at such an astonishment. How can an historian be expected to chronicle the doings of one who did not exist? To secure an historical evidence from Josephus, Tacitus etc., by way of manipulating their works, what abortive efforts the Christian interpolators have not made. See Smith in *Ecce Deus*, pp. 229-266 ;Whittaker in *Origins of Christianity*, pp. 20-23 ; Robertson in *Jesus Problem* p. 121, Van Eysinga in *Radical Views*, pp. 8-12 ; M. Couchoud in the *Enigma of Jesus*, pp. 19-23, and also Drews who has discussed the matter thread bare, and made an historical survey of the controversy. Dean Farrar too could not withhold his assent. After consulting all the authorities on the subject Drews has shown that they all admit J. Weiss's dictum : "There is no such thing as a really convincing witness in profane literature" (*Witnesses*, pp. 18-60). But what is the verdict of the gospels themselves? Dr. Carpenter in his *First Three Gospels* shows that John "reconstructed in the light of the later practice and belief" (p. 10). What about the Synoptists? Why, "the Synoptic naratives present to us the Jesus of Ecclesiastical belief, the idealised Christ as he was interpreted and received now by one party, now by another. To find the real Jesus we must learn to penetrate through a radiant haze with which he has been invested by tradition and faith" (p. 57). Through *radiant haze* or dark mist, others, their name is legion, have penetrated only to find the wood lost in the trees, or, as he Bengali adage puts it, the blanket is gone because of the wool being picked up. How is the doctor himself rewarded by the result of his own penetration? Why : "We may often have to lament that our results must after all remain uncertain" (p. 10). *Kismet*

Liberal view absurd—not supported by Josephus nor by Justus.

Nor by Gospels.

The standpoint of historicity has gone to pieces so completely that it is well-nigh impossible to retrieve anything from the wreckage. Now let us revert to the historian.

To speak of John and not of Jesus is to know Zwingli and ignore Luther in Reformation history. And it is done by a contemporary ! If at all, Jesus should at best be taken to have been less ordinary than the Baptist. But such a human personality does not serve our purpose. If we can at all extract a man, he is a chicken-hearted, narrow-minded, ill-tempered fanatical Jew. With such a figure at the head, the whole movement becomes doubly inexplicable and unintelligible. How can we then explain the successful Gentile propaganda ? The disciples surely ignored him, the servants were then greater than the master. So the master was not necessary. The extraordinary personality must not fail to make an abiding impression on his immediate and intimate following. But the teachings of the disciples had neither the tone nor the colour of the master. In the whole range of their preaching there is not a single reference to any deed of Jesus, though there arose hundreds of occasions for such a reference to settle their disputes, if they cherished any love for him. "They appeal to the Scriptures [*i.e.*, Old Testament], to certain necessities of exegesis, but never to any biographical facts of their own knowledge. They never say: We heard the Jesus say this and this, or We saw him do so and so." (*Ecce Deus*, p. 81). When actual impression is made what can disciples do for the master we know from the examples of Ánanda, Upáli, Sáriputra and Mahákáshyapa, among the others, of the Buddha's companions. From the Bible we find no impression was produced exactly where an impression should have been made. Jesus worked in Galilee and there it is that we are told : "No man ever spake like this man." But Jesus leaves Galilee and Galilee goes out of account altogether. The Christian message was sown broadcast among the Ephesians, Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, even among the dispersed Jews, but no message was sent to the Galilians, though it is to be most devoutly expected if Jesus is a historical person. Baron Herman von Soden, D. D., in his *Early Christian Literature* (p, 442) speaks of St. John the Evangelist: "How could he have forgotten Galilee ? How could he show himself wanting in affection for his countrymen, to whom his Master had devoted His life, with whom He had shown such touching and patient forbearance?" Von Soden thus interrogates simply to

Gentile propaganda unaccountable.

Disciples ignore Jesus : a contrast with the Buddha.

N. T. enigmatical if Jesus historical.

deny John's authorship, and for the matter of that, any immediate disciple's authorship of the Fourth Gospel. But it will not do to prove that John did not write the gospel, or it was not written from the reminiscences of any eye witness. The enigma goes far deeper. The gospels, all of them, were written from different stand-points to illustrate different theological views grouped round an imaginary person. So any the very least personal historical touch is wanting in them. However, the primitive churches sprang up in remote regions such as Damascus, Antioch, Crete and Libya. But, all the same, the propagandists are not friends and followers of Jesus. With the doubtful exception of the denier, yclept St. Peter, all the apostles go out of reckoning at once. He who, on the other hand, is said to have got up the whole show, had nothing to do with Jesus, nor had he come into personal contact with any immediate disciple for three years of his alleged conversion. If Jesus were a human personality, Paul's conversion, his activity and his peculiar doctrine would remain a riddle for ever. In order to avoid the difficulty some sort of a personal contact was fabricated, but scientific criticism has nothing to do with this miraculous conversion (See *S.* pp. 127—140). Now the question is, if Paul's unparalleled enthusiasm did not require any human personality to inspire it, what necessity is there for such a person to explain the lesser enthusiasm of a Peter or John?

Jesus not necessary for gospel propaganda.

It is an enigma which no human personality solves—the enigma why should people forthwith go to worship him as God even if he was a good man? Spinoza is said to have been the most God-intoxicated man; but none worshipped him. Innumerable examples of this kind can be cited. So, a reply to the most outstanding question is not forthcoming: why Jesus, if a man, was worshipped as God from the very beginning even by his companions. This appeared to Schopenhauer, Couchoud and others psychologically so impossible under the then circumstances of the case (S. p. 138). The only solution, which has been shirked so long, is that Jesus is God who has been humanised, * and the process of further and further humanisation has been going on till our day when divinity vanishes altogether and the gospel Jesus also vanishes with it. The New Testament

* The process is not altogether new even in Judaism. Moses, Abraham, Joshua were all gods afterwards humanised in order to make the Hebrew religion strictly monotheistic. In India Indra, Váyu, Varuna, though evidently natural forces, were in time given human characteristics. This process in scientific mythology is called evemerisation.

Evemerisation.

records stand firm against humanity, and we should in the meantime remember that the gospels were written at a somewhat advanced stage of humanisation. However, the cat could not be detained in the bag for long. Driven from post to pillar the theologian has been at last caught in the trap. Dr. Friedrich Loofs, Professor of Church History in the University of Halle-Wittemberg, said to be second only to Harnack in the mastery of the development of the Christian doctrine, finding "the ancient Christology untenable" has retired to a strong-hold not a whit more tenable. "My last refuge, therefore, is the term which Paul strongly emphasises in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, the *mystery of Christ*......It would be attempting impossible things", emphasises the Professor, "if we tried to understand the historical person of Jesus." Why blame, then, if old Tertullian declares : "The Son of God hath died,—it is wholly credible, because it is preposterous" (*ineptum?*)! The former position was untenable ; therefore, we are offered one absolutely incomprehensible! Surely, they have not failed to make Jesus nothing but historical! Jokes apart, is this not a cry of despair? Christianity is a memorable event of human history. Though we are encouraged to master history in all other fields, in religion we are treated like so may babes, as Indians in politics : *we must receive Christ on trust.* An historical fact can not remain unintelligible for ever. It must be known sooner or later. Really we know it, but are loath to admit that we do, because it goes against tradition. Yes, the spirit of man imperiously demands that we do understand it, as Dr. Smith has put it. (*The Open Court*, 1913).

Credible because preposterous!

It is claimed : Christianity affected humanity and the cause of human society tremendously more than any other movement ever did, and that this could not be effected except by an outstanding personality supplying the impetus at the outset or supporting its subsequent development, from within. As to the first part of the claim, this is misreading of history from end to end. Movements, inaugurated by Socrates, Cæsar, Newton, Napoleon—to be confined to Europe only, did as much, if not more. The reply to the second part is that the Christian movement is of composite character (S. pp.3—7). Its origin will not be determined by saying lo! here, lo! there. When the bloom of all the ancient civilizations—Turanian, Semitic, Aryan, spread around the Mediterranean, that was the time and signal for a most comprehensive socio-

Jesus does not explain Christianity, nor necessary for it.

religious movement. In the whole span of the world's history with perhaps the probable exception of India at the present moment, when did such a laudable opportunity for this devoutly desired for consummation occurr ? Only the spark was necessary. And the spark might as well have come from the cult of Isis or of Mithra, if organised to the extent Christianity was organised. As a fact of history, Mithraism almost won (S. p. 349). To speak the truth, Christianity technically so called, instead of utilising to the full extent, gave a misdirection to the forces at her disposal at more than one point. However, the nature and character of a conflagration are to be determined not by the match applied, but by the quality and quantity of the powder already stored up in the magazine. This is a historical question, pure and simple, to be objectively studied. To bring the subjective experience into it, as some are disposed to do, is to confuse the issue. Faith or subjective attitude does not go beyond itself, nor does it prove anything about its object of worship. When a man killed his own son before the bloody goddess *Káli*, it testified to the intensity of the man's faith and nothing else. This horrible thing was performed in the name of deities in different times and climes. What historical illumination do we get about Yahweh by the recorded sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham ? It will not make Krishna a whit more an actual historical person because Chaitanya, mistaking the quivering azure of the sea for him of Brindaban sporting in the Jumna, jumped into the deep to clasp him, and lost his life as the consequence. Granted all the crudities narrated about Francis d' Assisi and other saints—they are fit cases for psycho-pathologists' analysis and examination, is it not futile to adduce them as evidence to prove anything historical about Jesus, for or against ?

Subjective experience has no *locus standi* in historical research.

(2)

Let us now direct our attention to another aspect of the subject. The Higher Criticism of the Bible long ago perceived an element of symbolism in the gospel narrative, and the hypothesis was not confined to the miracles only. In the most enlightened Gnostic circles the symbolic character had been long recognised, traces of it being found even in Origen and Jerome, and also in Augustine. But the old critics did not formulate any scientific method to clearly distinguish between chaff and corn. Nor were they consciously aware that any assumption of symbolism would in any way be inimical to historicity. So

Symbolical interpretation not new.

any element in it would be taken as historical if it chanced to fit in with the Jesus-idea one was going to maintain. But the conception of the all-dominating all-originating personality of Jesus is a bugbear in the way of a right solution. The historicists forget, that any portrayal, ideal or historical, could be made lifelike—it being "a question of literary skill" which there is no reason to deny to the evangelists. Dr. Smith insists, if the symbolical view is accepted, the authors of the New Testament will be found out to be unequivocally of "a high level of mental power and artistic sense" (E. D. p. 10). The evangelists are many. "Consider the case of the birth and compare the stories of *Matthew* and *Luke*, which are mutually exclusive in every detail. Consider the Resurrection and Ascension, note the radical divergence of *Luke* and *Acts* from the rest in the all important matter of topography. Behold how *John* develops the Lazarus of *Luke* and transforms a parable into a history. Think of the hopeless diversity of form and of content in the story of the anointing of Jesus [S.p. 263]. Compare *Matthew's* Sermon on the Mount with *Luke's* Sermon in the Plain. So on throughout" (E D., p. 186). If their confessedly divergent portraits are perfect, and if their harmonisation is beyond all human hopes, it shows they drew ideal pictures according to the lights furnished them from their personal culture and social environments. And time, situation, and place were not unpropitious for a cult to grow without a towering personality which, moreover, even if Jesus is taken to be a man, cannot be supplied by the gospel accounts. On the other hand, "there seems to be not the slightest reason for doubting that the proto-Christian period was rich in personalities, and in personalities of a very marked variety. But there has not yet been presented one iota of proof that the Jesus was one of these persons" (Ibid p. 9). Our friends of the Theosophical Society, a survival of the Græco-Roman world of yore, announce the imminent advent of *Maitreya* or some such *avatár*. If one is fabricated, one such scheme is being engineered in South India—the proto-*avatár* period would be rich in "personalities of a very marked variety." Among other notabilities I am thinking of Enver, Zuglul or Kemálpásha ; Clemenceau, Wilson or Lloyd George ; Lenin, Nogi or Sunyat Sen, Gándhi, Arabinda or Tagore. Some of them reported dead but found in the field later on, will supply fine materials for a resurrection myth in this particular line. I say 'particular line' advisedly, because this is not the only channel by which that myth may come in, all myths being multifocal.

Jesus an ideal picture drawn by conflicting hands : e. g. *topography*.

A fusion of many personalities.

Not a historical person but Jewish Messianic ideal personified in different centres by dispersed Jews.

According to Dr. Smith Christianity was born in the Dispersion. One of the most remarkable phenomena of history is this dispersion of the Jews which began long before the destruction of Jerusalem. It was due to the unbearable persecution of a foreign domination, as in the case of the Irish. The Jews were a people without a country. Yet they preserved and are still preserving their type. The children of every nation are scattered among other nations, but eventually they are absorbed. The Jews have resisted this assimilation. While the ancient pagan gods of the Græco-Roman Empire were dwindling into non-entities around them, the Jews lost not a jot of their old religious fervour. This inspired awe and reverence for the Jewish dispensation. And in this cosmopolitan atmosphere the *Just one* (*cp. Acts.* 7⁵² and 12¹¹) of Plato (S. p. 318) and the Stoic *sage* could easily supply the model for the personification, of the Jewish Messiah, or, for the matter of that, of any Saviour-God. An actual historical personality could not serve the purpose and, in reality, did not. It would be a miracle of miracles, and therefore unexampled in the world's history and unjustifiable on scientific grounds that a group of disciples, after a few months' companionship suddenly brought to an end by a violent death between two robbers on the cross with the cry of *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabakthani*, were so possessed with his memories that they forthwith began to see on all sides visions of the risen God and worshipped him—him whom barely two months ago they knew in all the aspects of a frail humanity, and whom one of them, the Prime Minister of the 'Kingdom' denied altogether, and the other, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (S. p. 281). Unsophisticated people refer to these facts, but never enquire what they signify. Is it an historical record of the impression made by a Superman on his followers ? Bankruptcy of moral force was never illustrated more forcibly. Why did none of them write a memoir ? Because they did not exist (Vide Ch. X). These associates could never believe in the resurrection. The resurrection is not a man risen from the dead, but really the rise of monotheism to conquer the world is symbolically so represented. Christian authors in their blissful ignorance of outside literature, especially Jewish, have used hyperboles about Christ's originality about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But this position has been utterly demolished by subsequent comparative studies, as we have shown (vide Supra Chs II and III).

Biblical accounts scientifically interpreted stand firm against historicity.

These are hopeless attempts to supply a personality at the head of the conquering movement. Dr. Hastings Rashdall is one of many such panegyrists. We now fully understand that it has really been rash on Rashdall's part to write the following: "No one up to Jesus' time had ever taught them with equal clearness". (*Philosophy and Religion*, p. 153). Whoever now cares to know knows that gospel Jesus actually borrowed those ideas. And borrowed plume will hardly make world-shadowing wings. It is a psychological fact that virtue leads men to conversion and not conversion to virtue. The time from 150 B. C. to 150 A. D. was characterised neither by moral nor by intellectual turpitude. Vices were there as everywhere else. Are vices now absent from our midst ? Has not America, a Christian country, been deliberately pronounced as the World's Worst in Crime ? W. T. Stead's censure about "Maiden tribute of modern Babylon" still rings in our ears. The amazing revelation about *Modern Youth's Mad Pace* made by Judge Ben B. Lindsey in the American *Physical Culture* Magazine (1925) and also in his book, *The Revolt of Modern Youth*, does not justify Christianity's claim of moral superiority either. So there is nothing against the proposition that the first impulse of the religion came from different small Indo-Greek culture-centres and not from Jerusalem. This easily explains the discrepancies in the underlying unity. All societies worshipped God-Jesus in common, but under varying circumstances. The cult taken with them by the dispersed Jews from the home-land was worked up in geographically and culturally different centres. If these discrepancies are explained by the diverse individualities of the writers, the plea of one all-dominating personality is then gone. These discrepancies can not be explained away. But attempts are still made to explain by retaining the shadow of a personality. D. Stromholm, Ph. D. of the University of Upsala in his *Riddle of the New Testament* (translated for the first time from the original Swedish in the *Hibbert Journal*, July 1926) comes substantially to the same conclusion, though trying to present it under the veneer of historicity. He declares: "There were in pre-apostolic times two sects or parties among the followers of Jesus [God ?], with strongly marked differences, yet holding intercourse one with the other, and that afterwards, in the time of Peter [When was it ?] they united through a concordat in regard to some important points on which they previously differed" (p. 631). Dr.

Advent of Christianity no signal for virtue.

Discrepacies accounted for by different-centre-theory.

Stromholm's explanation of discrepancies.

Stromholm has certainly rehabilitated the personality of Jesus, but by removing the warp and woof altogether from the cloth. Because he adds: "In the original Judean sources and prior to the composition of the gospels, Jesus's life ("as a martyr who had suffered in the distant past") was represented as historical, *but with no importance attached to the exact period in time at which it had occurred.* The above is wholly consistent with the nature of a myth that always suits any time and place. Is not then the Gospel taken as an unconscious historicisation of a myth? Dr. L. P. Jacks, the able editor of the Journal, summarising, ratifies this view: "The chronological frame-work of the Gospels, in Dr. Stromholm's opinion, is therefore the artificial creation of later writers imperfectly acquainted with the nature of the material they embodied in their narrative" (H. Journal, Ap. 26, p. 574).

History but without fixed time! See (S. p. 331) why?

However, the diversity already pointed out is indelible. "In fact, the differences penetrate to the very root of the whole doctrine, and leave absolutely nothing on which there is agreement beyond the one conception of the one God" (E. D. p. 63). Mark and John did not discourse on the same individual! They cannot be forced into one. By no stretch of imagination can the same personality be made to reflect from *Mark* and *John*. They have not spoken of a historic man. No, the evangelists never portrayed a human personality. Read the gospels without prepossession and find out the insuperable difficulties of the human personality theory, the humanisers in a body failing to determine what the character of Jesus was. Their views and conceptions are as the poles asunder even regarding the indispensable facts of his life (S. p. 249). Every exegete imposes his pet idea of Jesus on the gospels, but never exposes one from them. Prepossession gives humanity to the gospels. A Muhammadan sees perfection in every page of the *Koran*, but the infidel does not. No objective method but the subjective caprice is the standard—no justification of the idea is given.

Discrepancies fatal to historicity.

Dr. Smith has changed it altogether. The starting-point is *Mark* 4[31]: "But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples," and *Matthew* 8[35]: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parable; and without a parable spake he not unto them." The original Christian preaching was symbolic, and the organisation was a secret society. The instruction was meant for the disciples only, and this method was adopted to conceal the meaning from outsiders. All the synoptists in

Smith stands on Gospels.

one voice support this view. So, the ordinary conceptions of Jesus go against the evangelists. In order to save the orthodox, even the liberal, view of the historical Jesus, evidences of the gospels must be rejected. The historical Jesus has actually been thrust into them with violence. This unequivocally intentional concealment of the teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven from outsiders is inconsistent with both the Orthodox and the Unitarian views of Christ. The human preacher is thrown over-board altogether by the gospel account. *It represents not a man but a propaganda.* Schmiedel in his utter amazement exclaims : "What pleasure could he have had in his teachings, if he had to believe his God-given task to be that of hiding from the people the truths of salvation" ? (*Gospels*, E. B. § 118, g . Therefore, he finds it "impossible in the mouth of Jesus." Of course, if Jesus is conceived humanly. Such an eminent authority as Dr. Crawford Burkitt gives, as the reason for the concealment, the opinion that "the doctrine of growth of the Kingdom of God"was preached by Jesus was so very contrary to the notions of the multitude. (*The Gospel History*, p. 46). Wellhausen is candid enough, but bewildered to find the verses (*Mk*. 2^{12}, $^{33-34}$) inconsistent with his preconceived Jesus-idea, and instead of giving up the idea, he would sacrifice the verses at the altar of his preconception. So, as Wilhelm Von Schnehem (*Open Court, 1912*) summarises, Smith proceeds with perfect logic when he rejects the "Jesus-idea", both orthodox and liberal, and, taking his stand on the clear, unequivocal and consistent testimony of the first three gospels, maintains that, in the case of the original evangelic teaching with its parables and accounts of miracles, we find a mystery-religion with the dialect of a (secret ?) religious society which was intentionally kept back from the uninitiated public (S. p. 359).

Jesus not a person but Theism personified.

What then was the leading thought or content of the proto-Christian secret propaganda ? It was a monotheistic campaign against pagan idolatry and polytheistic religions. And *repentance* as in the Old Testament (*Jer*. 15^5, 35^{15} ; *Ezek*. 14^6 ; *Zach*. 1^3 etc.) is not to be understood ethically but religiously—turning away from the many false gods to the one true God. Such a crusade could not be an open propaganda from the beginning, the fate of John the Baptist being a warning, and also the cursing of the fig tree symbolising that abortive effort. It was because of the fear of official Judaism on the one hand, and, on the other, of the state religion of the Roman authorities that recognised many gods including the emperor himself. This secrecy was originally a prudential step and not a part of the doctrine. The preponderance

of parables in the teaching is an uncontrovertible witness of this necessary secrecy of the original Christian proclamation. *Jesus* is the name under which the one God was worshipped by the secret brotherhood, and the name stands for monotheism in this symbolised drama.

Method of procedure. It is for this reason that the term 'Lord,' applied to Yahweh only, is used for Jesus from the very outset. The Kingdom of God is nothing but the secret society: therefore, the Pharisees are told, it is "in the midst of you," and the coming of the Kingdom means nothing but the coming of the society into the open by gradually gathering in strength and volume. The secret will not always remain a secret; it must be revealed, but the revelation must proceed with circumspection The sending of the sheep among the wolves with so much caution is an example to the point. The lamp will not be put under the bushel for ever. One supreme condition for entering the brotherhood was to hand over one's possessions and become 'poor' (Essene—Ebonite i. e. the poor). This idea of the Kingdom only is consistent with many otherwise ununderstandable passages. The parable of the mustard seed can not be in any other way explained.

This standpoint explains verses that are otherwise inexplicable. This relieves the demonology of the Bible of its odium. The expulsion of the

All facts easily explained. demons is the first task of the preachers of the Kingdom (*Mk.* 3[11]; *Mt.* 10[1]; and *Lk.* 10[11]). In Origen the heathen gods are demons. Idolatry is symbolically conceived as a filthy disease—possession by demons (Legion—many, i. e. the polytheistic gods and goddesses). The metaphor of disease lay handy in the Old Testament where Israel's reversion to idolatry is represented as a disease which Yahweh heals (E. D. p. 62). The cure is the acceptance of the one God, here Jesus. To make Jesus the healer in this sense is in accordance with tradition. Smith quotes the following from Theophilus: "Entrust yourself to the physician and he will coach the eyes of your soul and of your heart. Who is the physician? God, who heals and makes alive through his word and wisdom." (p. 54). As a matter of course, the disease is confined to the heathen Galilee. Dr. Smith emphasises the fact that Jesus effected no such cure in his Judean ministry (S. p. 134 f. n.). If this is accepted, half the battle is won. Of course, it is not contended that all symbols are intelligible to us. Some would elude our grasp. Who can undertake to, in all respects, decipher minds two thousand years old? We must consider the general tenor. In a law court the verdict is based on the general spirit, scope and intent of a document. The law overrides isolated phrases and sentences that may have got there through carelessness

of thought and expression. In the gospels the general tenor deals with a god. Here and there, there may be a reference, ostensibly interpolated, to a man. But the general tenor can not be interpolated. And it should be remembered that the gospels were written when the humanisation had already begun. If Christianity is a proselytising religion, Jesus' charge to his disciples, when sending them on a mission tour, simply giving them the power to cast out demons or heal every disease, (*Mk.* 3^{14-15} ; *Mt.* 10^{1}) taken at its face value, would be the height of mockery. When the *seventy*, signifying the general mission to the Gentiles in *Luke* 10^{17-20}, reported to Jesus that demons obeyed them in his name, he simply said : "I was beholding Satan like lightning falling from heaven." Here there is no mistaking the meaning that the demons stand for heathen gods, Jesus for monotheism, and Satan falling from heaven is dethronement of polytheism from its high position. In Origen's *Contra Celsus* "all the gods of the heathen are demons," and "Jesus is said to have overthrown the doctrine about demons on Earth" (E. D., p. 54). Take similar passages from the Bible and the sense becomes too obvious to need any elucidation. There can not be any other interpretation without making the whole thing ludicrous. No rational being can think that the healing of a few lunatics and lepers, or even of all the lunatics and lepers of the world would make Satan abdicate his exalted seat. Other passages will show that the *healing* can not be physical healing. In one place (*Mk* 6^{34} ; *Mt.* 9^{36}) he took compassion on the multitude and taught them at lenth. Well and good. But elsewhere (*Mt.* 12^{15}) the multitude followed him and "he healed them all." This wholesale healing of a large number of people at once is meaningless in the physical sense and still more so as he charged them to keep it a secret. This must be conversion, the publication of which might bring in troubles by precipitating a counter demonstration. A secret proselytising propaganda was coming to the fore, but wanted not to be hasty. And Judaism also needed care. Therefore, in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, he healed the "withered hand." Yes, the One God who heals is worshipped as Jesus the Healer and is necessarily symbolically represented as a man. The erring woman is also symbolical either of apostacy or of idolatry, and this also is quite in keeping with the Old Testament idea. If not symbolical, the prominence of public women in the gospel-story would be a hard nut to crack.

If not symbolical, mission-charge is a mockery.

Healing symbolical of converting heathens.

The appearance of Jesus in flesh was originally symbolical and allegorical. In the words of Pindar : "And then a lonely faring God

came suddenly upon us, having cast about him the shining semblance of a reverend man" (E. D. p. 198). Paul (*Phil.* 2^{8}) does not give us a man but "a servant becoming in likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man." The young man clothed in linen (*Mark* 14^{51-52}) has been the despair of all exegetes. When Jesus was arrested, a young man in linen was following the crowd. The soldiers tried to catch him. He eluded their grasp leaving the linen in their hands. The linen they captured, not the man. And this young man we see sitting on the right side of the open sepulchre (*Mark* 16^{5}). Some have suggested that the young man (as in the former case) was Mark himself. The literal interpretation bodes no success. Quite a flood of light has been thrown on the point by Hermann Raschke in his *Die Werkstatt.* L. G. Rylands sets forth the idea in the following way in the May (1926) issue of the *Literary Guide*, p. 84. Marcion distinguishes two elements in man—(i) Pneuma, pure spirit, the divine essence of which man takes possession through belief in Christ—it goes without saying that the Christian Gnosticism comes down from its pre-Christian predecessors ; and (ii) Psyche or soul, the vital and intelligent part which is visible but not material. There is no resurrection of the material body, but psyche may die and come to life again. Now, Jesus, like all other men, was psyche to begin with ; but pneuma descended on him at baptism. Pneuma is immortal, so it had to leave Jesus before crucifixion. This is the explanation of the linen cloth, i. e., psyche remaining in the hands of Jesus' captors while the naked body, i. e., pneuma fled. This linen cloth is the visible body of Jesus which is not material. The Docetic contention was that Jesus had no material body, therefore he never suffered. So Raschke maintains that when Jesus says "I", he is speaking as pneuma, but when he calls himself "son of man", he speaks as psyche. In *Mark*'s Gospel Jesus never says "I" shall suffer, or "I" shall be put to death ; but always the "son of man". We find here the uninterpolated Docetic hand of Mark and not of Mark the man. According to the Docetic philosophy, it is blasphemous to think that the real Jesus was captured, humiliated or crucified. The young man in linen was the Angel-self (Hebrew) or Logos (Greek), of whom Jesus is taken to be the incarnation. Doceticism will not accept real *humanity*, it is only the assumed garb. What the garment is to the body is the body to the soul. Here we are reminded of the Bhagavat Gitá—वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि (2^{22}). Then, what is the hidden meaning of the young-man-in-linen's adventure ? The God

***Young-man-in-linen* no longer a mystery.**

Docetic interpretation.

Jesus could not be arrested, the linen vesture, the Jesus-body, the garment of flesh concealing his divinity, was caught hold of in this capture-episode. Docetic Mark's own hand is unmistakably present here, and the symbolic representation could not be made more perfect. In our country we have got an exact parallel of this Docetic philosophy. Śreekrishna never leaves Brindában even by a step. Then, what about all these wanderings attributed to him? Only his shadow-self from Brindában departs. When Akrura carried him away from Brindában, it was only his shadow that went out. This Docetic philosophy has its parallel in the Buddha-legends also.

Parallel in Krishna-cult.

Some passages in the New Testament * clearly point out that *literal interpretation* was made orthodox step by step. Especially from the *Epistles* of John it is quite evident that what they afterwards designated as Christianity was the mythological form of an earlier Christism. It is accepted on all hands that the Gnostics believed in the doctrine of the Christ, i. e., the manifestation of the Supreme Being in the human soul. Now, at the time of the Christian era, a body of men rose who identified Christ with an ancient God, Jesus, giving the story an historical colouring. And this is exactly how theology is turned into mythology. Here also there is a parallel in Hindusthán. Our Scriptures teach us that Náráyana the Absolute has three aspects—*Brahman*, *Paramátman* and *Bhagaván* as he manifests Himself in nature, in the individual and in collective life. Now the *Purána* or mythology came into existence by humanising Náráyana in His *Bhagaván* aspect, and, at the same time, identifying Him with one of the ancient gods, Krishna, himself in his developed form, the evolutional self of the solar god Vishnu. This evemerisation or, for the matter of that, historicisation of Gods is due to the mythopoeic tendency of man all over the world. However, it is at the outset a heresy. But, as in all lands and in all ages, more people amuse themselves with mythology than favour a pure spiritual religion, this heresy, being favoured by the multitude, was established as orthodoxy. And this is how, to borrow the Buddhistic terminology, *Maháyána* comes into existence. So the Hináyanis, the original orthodox adherents of the faith, were thrown out as heretics. And this is not a solitary event in history. Here too a parallel can be cited from Hinduism. When idol-worship was first introduced, it was a heresy. Manu ostracised

Literal interpretation formerly a heresy.

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* 2 *John* 7. See also 2 *Peter* 2' ; *Jude* 4 ; *Gal.* 2^{4} ; 1 *John* 2^{22-23} and 4^{2-3} etc., etc.

the *Devala* Bráhmin, the priest who presided over the rite. But afterwards this form of worship became all but universal, and none but the worshipper of the idol was orthodox. In Christianity the earlier pagan deities, as the Buddhistic gods and goddesses in the case of neo-Hinduism, were adopted, sometimes with the original names unaltered. Christianity metamorphosed the gods into saints and idol-worship into saint-worship, thereby giving heresy an orthodox appearance. We are told this, in so many words, by the *Second Epistle of John* of which verse 7 runs thus: "Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, *even* they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh." As we know, symbolical exposition was the order of the day among the Christians as among the Gnostics.* And *gnosis* was the name of primitive Christianity, and the Christians took to Scripture-writing and Gospel-making in imitation of the Gnostics. Latterly the literal interpretation became dominant for the satisfaction of the lesser *intellects* by whom the Church had now been overstocked in virtue (vice ?) of the indiscriminate conversion of pagans *en masse*, and symbolism, though held in disfavour for some considerable time past, was eventually denounced as a heresy.† Myths are very easily and very often foisted on the unawary world as well-authenticated history even to-day. During the great war, in 1917, when the story of the German Corpse Factory was propagated, a British Cabinet Minister, Lord Robert Cecil, gave it out in the Mother of Parliaments that "in view of other actions taken by the German Military authorities, there is nothing incredible in the present charge against them." Now, in this year of grace, 1925, the

Parallels from Hinduism and Budhhism.

How designed myths are propagated.

"German Corpse Factory".

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* Referring to the Naassene Hymn, Dr. Smith points out that gnosis was an early name for the Christian movement" (*Ecce Deus*, p. 87). That is, the Christian movement was simply a continuation of Gnosticism (S. pp. 170-171). Otherwise there is no explanation for this movement's assuming the very name of the earlier one against the universal practice of new religious persuasions. *Luke* 1[77], is referred to in this connection where the term *Gnosis* is actually used in the sense of *Gospel*. Festivals including Xmas were borrowed from the Gnostics. It has been seriously proposed that the *Mark* is only Marcion's Gnostic Gospel retouched. Here is the clue for the missing Q.

Mark is Marcion.

† The Bráhma Samáj a Theistic movement of India inaugurated by Rájá Rámmohun Roy at the beginning of the 19th century, is deadly against all sorts of idolatry, image-worship and symbolic representation of God. But its devotional literature and hymnals are full of imageries and symbols. If one is bent on a literal interpretation of them, one will find no difficulty in collecting ample materials to suggest from them a refined kind of image-worship, if not an embryonic form of idolatry.

From Bráhmaism also.

authors of the canard confess to it that they invented the charge as a war propaganda against Germany. If in the broad daylight of 20th century such a myth could be manufactured for the propaganda work and it passed off as an actual fact, monstrous though it is, and it could not even now be rectified if the authors did not disclose the fact, then, what stands in our way to believe, when clear evidences are forthcoming, that two thousand years ago in a dark corner of the world some religious fanatics foisted a myth on the credulous people as a part of their religious propagandism ? When, on the other hand, such myths are exploded, they refuse to be eradicated. Because numerous men are there who would swallow a canard, and cherish it through ages handing it over from generation to generation. We have the Hallwell monument in the very bosom of Calcutta to commemorate the *Black Hole* erected just at the time when it has been proved to be a myth. So, when such a tangible memorial as a stone structure does not prove historicity, what of a floating tradition ? Really, what was a figure to begin with, when elaborated and literally interpreted, was subsequently misunderstood as an historical event. *Luke's* parable of Lazarus was from such a tendency turned by John (S. pp. 248,356) into history. Signs are not wanting in the *Rámáyana* that Sitá, at the commencement regarded only similar to Lakshmi, herself turned into the goddess subsequently. Even such an orthodox traditionalist as Dr. Carpenter is obliged to admit that, in some cases at least, symbolism has been turned into actual facts. He remarks: "The account of the fig tree which withered away beneath the curse of Jesus has long been a stumbling block to apologists for the Gospel narratives. But there is reason to believe that it is a kind of transition into incident of what was in reality a parable of unbelieving Israel, so that the tradition converted a story of symbolic meaning into the record of an actual occurrence." (*The First Three Gospels*, pp. 35-36). The Unitarian apologist is concerned here more with the integrity of the character of the hero than with the authenticity of the hero's history; therefore this concession to the symbolic interpretation. Because, if the incident is literally interpreted, "the charge of unreasonable violence against an innocent and unconscious tree" laid at the door of the Son of God, remains unrelieved (Ib. p. 149). Only just what for the nonce serves the purpose is accepted ! But the Unitarian evangelist is not unaware that there are many more

"Black Hole."

Symbolism saves the gospel, e. g. "the Fig Tree."

inconvenient facts that also will bear only a symbolical interpretation. He speaks of the account of the Nativity in the same vein: "They must be regarded as symbolic; they express beliefs, they pourtray ideas, they do not relate facts." So also the Temptation, Transfiguration and many other stories should be regarded not as biographical but as edificatory (Ib. p. 59). If it is symbolical in this or that case, why not in all? Very little or nothing at all remains after this pruning-knife is impartially applied. It is evident, Dr. Carpenter must have been feeling his way, however blunderingly and however too late it might be, out of the blind alley into which his early historical enthusiasm had driven him. Now there was no other way left for this grand old man of the English Unitarianism than to retire to skulk in his tent as the gospels sorely disappointed him, we have already (S. p. 365) pointed out how, by refusing to come to terms with him in order to support his views previously formed independently of their critical study (S. p. 259).

Carpenter's dilemma.

This symbolic interpretation is the secret which makes all facts of Christianity intelligible. And there is nothing illogical inherent in a new interpretation that goes against the traditional view (S. pp. 142, 297, 302). Compare the modern interpretations of the Rig-veda and Buddhism. By historical researches the original meaning has now been restored to many passages where the tradition has only misled throughout the ages. And the original meaning seems to be so very strange to our changed perspective, yet it is found to be the truer view. So we are absolutely sure that the key has been found with which we can now force the dark chambers of the gospels to yield their real treasures. Many hitherto unintelligible details are understood now. Miracles no longer cause us trouble. The Gadarene demoniac (S. p. 134) is the heathen who gives up polytheism and accepts the one God. The man with the withered hand is Judaism that now gets new strength. We understand the rich man to be the Israel which is unwilling to give up its spiritual prerogative and share its property with the poor Gentile. The Prodigal son is the Gentile, but his jealous brother is the Jew. Of the two sisters one is the Jew too much absorbed in formalities, but the other represents the Gentile. Judas Iscariot is the Jew handing over the Kingdom to the Gentile. The poor beggar Lazarus is the Gentile, and the Crucifixion, in one of its aspects, symbolises the rejection of the Jesus-cult by the Jews aided by the Romans who are afraid of the Kingdom on political grounds. Jesus' address to his mother: "Woman! who art thou, what have I to do with thee?"

Unintelligible details thus made intelligible, e.g., Gadarene demoniac.

shows him up to be the very incarnation of rudeness in civil life, if it is taken as a fact of actual history, and no admiring disciple could have recorded it. But this is really a symbolical representation. The mother stands for the old Jewish order from which Jesus now breaks away.

Let us now analyse, in detail, a very dark passage and see what harvest we gather with our sickle of symbolic interpretation.

Literally interpreted Jesus' *home-coming* is meaningless.

Take *Mark* 3[20-35] ; "And he cometh home. And there comes together again a multitude. So that they could not even eat bread. And having heard it, his friends went out to overpower him, for they said that he was distraught......" (*Ecce Deus*, p. 190). At the very outset it is to be remarked that all *ologies*—mythology, pathology, psychology, theology—have all been exhausted, but no clue to this passage has been discovered. To take it literally in order to say that because there were many men, therefore they could not even eat bread would be a piece of 'puerile absurdity.' In no case is the meaning clear. Only a symbolical interpretation approaches the solution by suggesting that the rush of the people to the Jesus-cult is so very great that the twelve apostles just appointed are not adequate to minister unto them. Then the friends drop from heaven and vanish, serving no other purpose than that of leaving the exegetes in the lurch. One thing is clear. "More is meant than meets the ear." Considering the tenor of the narration, the narrator is not likely to be in a mood to introduce unnecessary details, but here the eating of bread is one such detail. What we understand, innumerable readings and codices apart, is this : The cult was born outside. We find here its *home*-coming to Judea. Refer to any books, *Acts or Epistles*, and you will see that after the *Resurrection* there is a rush of converts, and by resurrection is meant the resurrection of Theism. The eating of bread must be taken spiritually. The harvest is great but the labourers are few. From the beginning the Christian Church was a totalisation (S. p. 171) of many sects—in some cases they were as the poles asunder. So Jesus is distraught or distracted, but all proclaim Jesus Christ to be their point of unity. "All are worshippers of Jesus. This is their common meeting ground as the *Upanishad* for all the warring schools of Hindu Philosophy. But there is a world of difference among them as to the nature of the deity. We have already pointed out that Doceticism credits only a shadow-body to the incarnation. While, on the other hand, there is the gross idolatrous view that

an actual God lived and died on the cross. Between these two extremes "they fought like devils for conciliation." Rámmohun also noticed "such acts of cruelty and violence" (2nd Ap. Ch. V). But all the sects are none the less friends of Jesus. We find a parallel in the contemporary history of India (1923). All political sects swear by the name of Swaráj. But when the question of definition arises, *Swaráj* is really on a state of being "distraught". At the one extremity we find complete independence, and, at the other, a little relaxation of the pressure of the foreign yoke would satisfy for the present our hankering after Swaráj. The gulf between them is bridged over by innumerable shades of opinions, both theoratically and practically different. But every one of them is a swarájist—a friend of Swaráj. They are all friends or relations, because they 'who are not against me are for me,' i.e., are my friends. But on the other hand, every sect is out to capture or overpower Jesus, i.e., to announce its view to be the right one. Or, it may be that there were secret societies still in Palestine, they heard of him and came out to make a common cause with him. Now Scribes came from Jerusalemto pronounce their verdict that Jesus was possessed with Beelzebul (Beelzebub ?). Jerusalem being the stronghold of official Judaism, it goes without saying that a creed born in heathen land could not be recognised. It must be another form of paganism, however mighty. This is expelling demons through the prince of demons. But the Scribes were silenced by an *argumentum ad hominem.* The mother with the brethren standing outside is Judaism and the Jewish people holding aloof from the Jesus-cult, and yet urging it to conform. But the new wine will not enter the old bottle, nor recognise any race-privilege. All are equal in the Kingdom. The mother of the new cult is the Church or Holy Ghost,* and the brothers and sisters are those who join the Church. It can be safely asserted that no other interpretation meets all the points so well. This interpretation throws surprisingly clean light on this dark episode of human history and it comes as an agreeable surprise. The historical Jesus who has been reduced almost to a nonentity by theologians cannot explain the sudden and simultaneous appearance of the cult in many places, and in such diversified forms. The only explanation is that these secret societies grew up among the dispersed Jews in widely separated regions of the Roman Empire and made converts. Now it is no mystery that Paul so often finds 'brethren' in so many places,

All difficulties cleared by symbolism.

Historicity thrown up by N. T.

* "Even now my mother the Holy Spirit took me by one of my hairs and bore me up unto the great Mount Tabor", so says Jesus in the *Apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews.* Vide S. pp. 86, 169, 301.

though visited for the first time. Because it had been hatched in secret in a wide region, and when the world wanted some such thing, the thing came into the open. *Acts* 9[10-22] says, the new religion had already been at Damascus before Paul went there. Aquila, Priscilla, Bar-Jesus were Christians before the birth of Christianity! *Acts* 2[5-13] suggests the simultaneous outburst of the propaganda all around the mediterranean. This can only be explained on the supposition of a secret cult existing from before in many remote and widely separated regions. Except in certain palpably interpolatory passages why is there no mention of Jesus' teaching in the *Epistles*, *Revelation* and *Patristic* apologists? *Acts* 18[24-25] is damaging to historicity. We are not to be astonished, therefore, to learn that the learned Alexandrian, Apollos, a most zealous and eloquent preacher, proclaimed the *doctrine concerning Jesus* (not even this Jesus definitely) "knowing only the baptism of John," i. e., not knowing the so-called historical Jesus. And this ignorance wars so stubbornly with the traditional theory of Christian origins! The preachers never preached the Rabbi Carpenter. Really, if the preaching had turned on such a weak pivot, i. e., the Man-Jesus, it would have made no appeal to the Gentiles. It would have been the silliest twaddle and could at most have won only a few Jewish converts. But, in reality, it was a serious affair to begin with—a struggle between a poor monotheism and the regal idolatry.

Everywhere pre-Christian Christians.

This is the story. To it was added the idea of the suffering and sacrificed God suggested by Isaiah and Plato, but mainly derived from such cults as of Jesus-Bar-Abbas (Infra Ch. XXc) and other heathen mysteries, lying near at hand round about. On this wise the Christian drama of redemption arose. As the planet sweeps round the sun, it gathers up showers of foreign materials, fragments of shattered worlds, and assimilates them into its body, so, too, as the great idea of the Jesus, the healing, saving, demon-expelling God, circled round through the circum-Mediterranean regions, as Dr. Smith so beautifully puts it (in the *American Journal of Theology*, April 1911), the idea could hardly fail to attract and attach to itself many wandering truths of dismembered faiths. And these truths venerable in their antiquity, "descended from Nippur and Babylon, from the Tigris and Euphrates and possibly even from the Indus and the Ganges" (E. D. p. 66.)

Tributary myths.

3

Here we may profitably refer to two other books on which

unsuccessful attempts were made to expunge their pre-Christian origin, or, failing, to inoculate them with the Christian virus. They are among the few books that have been saved to humanity from Christian vandalism to give us a peep into the genesis of Christianity. What an irreparable loss was caused to humanity by religious fanaticism can not now be fully estimated! We find the following in *Christianity and Civilization* by Charles T. Gorham: "The remains of Greek and Latin literature which the monasteries preserved in ignorance of their nature are small compared with the quantity the Christian bigotry destroyed. It was by an orthodox ecclesiastic that the Alexandrian Library was pillaged out of existence." One of these preserved books is the *Didâchê* or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. "That such a document existed within the early Church," Dr. Georg Brandes assures us, "was known through the writings of Eusebius and Athanasius" (*Jesus* ; *A Myth*, p. 123). The treatise averted its inevitable fate from a confusion of names. But, when saved, it was superficially Christianised, though its pre-Christian origin is easily detected, and it makes us acquainted with a form of worship connected with a pre-Christian Jesus who can in no way be identified with the hero of the gospels. Here we find a prayer of the Supper which is quite different in terminology from the Gospel one. Moreover, Dr. Drews points out: "This Jesus who reveals life and knowledge, and in this way communicates immortality to his followers, has a suspicious resemblance to the Jesus of the ancient Gnostics in whose case also the knowledge (*gnosis*) revealed by him was the essential mark and condition of eternal life" (*Witnesses*, p. 223). As Christianity has but scant regard for knowledge, if the book were originally written by a Christian hand, knowledge or *gnosis* could not have been given so prominent a place.

Didâchê and _Revelation_ telling the same tale.

The other book is the *Revelation* which has got a place in the New Testament also through mistake. Here too are unmistakable signs—internal evidences—of the symbolical and allegorical representation of some God-Jesus. The terms used can never be applied to the man-Jesus of the gospels. Its "Alpha and Omega," the seven stars in the right hand, the head and hair as white as wool and snow, eyes like a flame of fire, the two edged sword coming out of the mouth, and so on and so forth, could not be applied to Jesus, a man born of a woman. So Dr. Drews interrogates: "How could we explain the transformation of such a Jesus into these extraordinary mixtures of

the grotesque and gigantic so soon after his death? Have we not rather a product of the unrestrained imagination of some religious sect or conventicle, to whom Jesus was from the start, not a man but a supernatural, divine being, and in whose ecstatic visions mythical and prophetic elements grew into the frenzied figures which we have in *Revelation*?" (*Witnesses* p. 224). Its pre-Christian origin is betrayed by another fact amongst others. Christian interpolation has allotted twelve basement-courses to the twelve Christian apostles in the New Jerusalem, whereas the twelve gates fall to the lot of the guardian angels of the twelve tribes of Israel. If it were originally a Christian book, the gates and not the basements would have been naturally appropriated by the apostles, as suggested by Mr. Robertson (S. H. C. p. 16). In heaven also the fanciful deity is surrounded not by the *twelve*, as promised in the gospels.

e. Jesus Barabbas.

1

Crucifixion the central myth.

The crucifixion is the far-off event towards which all other events tend and round which all Biblical interests centre. Dr. Drews says: "In the conception of *Mark* the death of Jesus is, as Weiss observes, the real aim and content of his life (!), it is seen in advance, and everything works up to it, so that the entire gospel is really a story of the Passion stretching backwards." (*Witnesses*, p. 156) This is the central myth which the cult most zealously appropriated to itself. The sacrificed Jesus is at the core of early Christian cult-propaganda. A long series of slain Jesuses, ritually put to death at an annual sacrament "for the sins of many," is the ultimate anthropological ground from which arose the mythical biography of the gospels. And this sacrament was not confined to the Jews only, nor did it originate among them. It is supposed by Mr. Robertson "that certain forms and cults of human sacrifice, first evolved anciently in Central Asia, passed to America on the east, and to the Semitic peoples on the west, resulting in the latter case in the central 'mystery' of Christianity" (P. C., p. xxiii). The god of the rite developed into a Saviour-God. "The original meaning of the anthropic ritual was forgotten," says Robertson Smith, "and the death of the God was explained by legendary history as a thing of the far past" (*Semites*, pp. 412-413). In our country such a development of cults is not a strange phenomenon and does not involve much difficulty to understand. And the pagan world round about was not without its evidence. Similarly,

in Phrygia, where Christianity early made a considerable impression and did not fail in its turn to be considerably impressed upon, "the most devoutly worshipped among the gods," says Grant Allen, "was Attis who, as Professor Ramsay suggests, was almost certainly embodied in early times as an annually slain man god" (*The Evolution of the Idea of God*, p. 245). As the Jesus-cult was destined to have a Gentile growth, the old Judaic idea of the new Saviour was necessarily universalised ; and the divergent sects, some already in existence and some newly formed by the changing needs of the widening cult, contributed to the gospel-contradictions, so enigmatical to the biographists to explain.* (S. pp. 370, 372 etc.)

Crucified Jesus an ancient cult.

There was a Semitic sacramental cult with a slain saviour-god, Jesus, who had assimilated to himself the victim annually sacrificed to him, as was the case with the Asiatic cults like those of Attis and of Adonis. The Christian Eucharist, which was only a continuation of the sacrament practised in the Attis and Adonis cults or in the Mithrian worship, was from the beginning presided over by a Priest (Carpenter, *Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 96) for no other reason than that in these original cults the priestly system had already been elaborated to its minutest details. Christianity only adopted it. And in the Christian mythology Jesus is called the High Priest (S. p. 50) who sacrificed himself for the good of the world. The sacrificial rite, which in the case of Christianity now consists in the Last Supper, was, together with the dramatised story of the Passion, latterly reduced to the Jewish rite of Jesus-Barabbas, Jesus the Son of the Father, in which the victim was at first hailed as the king and then executed, both being mock-practices, though originally there had been an actual human sacrifice, perhaps, in commemoration of Isaac's *carban* attempted by Abraham. This cult existed in different parts of Asia Minor whence it spread to Greece and Egypt in various forms. Under the Jewish control the sacrificial sacrament thinned down to a thank-offering in which the "body and blood" vaguely reminded the worshipper of the Divine One's death.

Its cannibalistic ancestry.

The root of the sacrament came down from the cannibalistic stage (S. p. 78) when, by partaking of the blood and flesh of the enemy-victim, the warrior thought of inheriting the enemy's valour. In its somewhat spiritualised form, the devotee, partaking of a material substitute, thought himself united with God in spirit. Eating the sacrificed animal is a necessary

* P. C. and J. P. specially to be consulted. Also *Golden Bough*.

adjunct of the ceremony. In many cases the victim is identified with the god, as in pre-Christian Mexico and among the Khonds of Orissa. As soon as the goat is, in the *Kálipujá* of the Hindus, consecrated by the prescribed *mantra* it becomes divine. This idea prevailed among the Greeks in the most concrete form. And Christianity is suffused through and through with Greek ideas also (cp. Guha's Bengali *Socrates*). So this vicarious eating of the God was a definite sacrament. The Spanish government found both the cannibalistic and symbolic foims in Mexico. Eating a baked image, raised on a cross and then pierced for sanctification, was the common practice in its symbolic side. The cannibalistic sacraments preceded it under conventional limitations. Among the Khonds the annual victims were taken from families "bought with a price" for the purpose. The male was given an absolute sexual liberty and, when slain "for the sins of the world," was liturgically declared a God. (See *Golden Bough* and *Pagan Christs*). In his *Introduction to the History of Religion* (1896, p. 291), Professor Jevons speaks of such a "primitive idea of the sacrificial meal, namely, that it is by the participation in the blood of the God that the spirit of the God enters into his worshipper." Of course, the sacrificed victim is taken to be the substitute of the god. This is the universal practice. In such a secret rite there was a brotherhood of twelve. In the *Acts* 16^{1-7} it is related that Paul found at Ephesus 12 disciples whom he could not have certainly distinguished from Jesuists had he not, by chance, asked them about the Holy Ghost. They replied they did not even know the meaning of the term. This shows, there existed pre-Christian societies of *twelve* who were, for all practical purposes, like the latter-day Christians without know ing Jesus. As, with the primitive Christians, the Eucharist was all in all (S. pp. 91-92), so these sporadic societies of which signs are abundant in the *Acts*, used to hold secret sacramental meals for which 12 persons were required. They would be called "brothers of the Lord" (S. p. 182) as union with the Lord or some such form of *advaita sádhan* was attempted by these sacraments. As Robertson has remarked, "brethren of the Lord" is comprehensible only as the group title of a "fraternity" in view of the gospel stories as to the repudiation of Jesus by all his kindred (*Jn* 7^{5}). So, it may be remarked by the way, that the attempt to prove the historicity of Jesus from "brethren of Jesus" referred to in *Mt.* 12^{46}, 13^{55} ; *Mk.* 3^{31-32} ; *Lk.* 8^{19-20} ; *Jn.* $7^{3, 5, 10}$ fails. And the James of *Gal.* 1^{19} seems to be no uterine brother or a half brother

Crucified image eaten.

Pre-Christian societies of the "twelve".

of the so-called founder as there is not "even a traditional trace of him as a brother of Jesus in the *Acts*" though he "before Paul's advent had come to something like primacy in the Church" (P. C. p. xix).

"Brethren" proves no historicity.

"Brother" here means what we call *Guru*-brother—brother because belonging to the same religious fraternity. Mr. Robertson Smith in his '*Religion of the Semites*' (p. 269) maintains: "The sacrificial meal was an appropriate expression of the antique ideal of religious life, not merely because it was a social act *and an act in which the god and his worshippers were conceived as partaking together*." We have italicised the words to show that the Last Supper, from which Christianity developed its peculiarities and on which it was practically based, was only the dramatisation of this universally practised rite. However, the personal gods are generally formed out of a god-name —originally a concept or a conceptual aggregate of functions taking shape round the name. This was exactly the case with Krishna also, "being fully in consonance with the processes," emphasises Dr. Seal, "by which myths and religious creeds have been built up in universal history" (V. and C., p. 10). The devotees of Dionysos and Osiris believed in their historicity. In the Bacchic cult we have a cult-type in which wild devotion is given to the wholly mythical founder. Proselytisation by the adherents of such a cult is as possible as by others. Proselytisation was practised by the followers of the secret cult of Dionysos (vide Guha's *Socrates*). And to the Jews an opportunity offered itself in the fall of the Temple of Jerusalem freeing them from Judaic trammels and claims, and thereby opening the way out for universalisation of the creed. The Jewish promoters of the creed developed the Saviour-God (now indistinguishable from the pagan forms) into a Messiah. Here Jesuism was christened Christism or Christianity as the Greek word *Christus* (the "anointed") means Messiah. Paul Carus expresses a doubt about the original meaning of the term *Christos* as it means more to 'besmear' than to 'anoint.' If the Greek translator meant Messiah, he might have used a more dignified word. It is probable that the name *Christos* was originally the title of a saviour broadly used among certain classes of people, and then generalised in the sense of the Hebrew Messiah. "The suggestion has been made," observes Mr. Carus, "that Christos might be a corrupt form of the

How gods are formed.

Universalisation the effect of the fall of the Temple.

Pre-Christian *Christos* movement.

Sanskrit name Krishna, but how shall we," naturally interrogates the curious savant, "account for the change of N to T"? I do not know the philological view-point of its solution, but unfortunately

Krishna and Christ.

Dr. Paul Carus no longer is in the land of the living to be told how in pronouncing the name *Krishna* we actually change it into *Christo*, thereby supplying the desiderated answer to his query. However, the name of the original cult-god being Jesus, we necessarily do not find the name "Christian" in the New Testament except once in the *Acts* 11^{26}, and that has the appearance of a later interpolation, "belonging to a time when the term had become a name of honour in the eyes of some and a name of reproach in those of others" (*Witnesses*, p. 44. See also *Peter* 4^{16}, and *Acts* 26^{28}). The name became new, the thing remaining the same. "And those who lived according to the Logos [a clear allusion to the Gnostics] were really Christians though

Christianity pre-Christian.

they have been thought to be atheists (Heretics?)," so says Clement of Alexandria in *Strom*. "And this in our day is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times," observes St. Augustine in *Opera*, "but as having, in later times, received this name." But the tragedy is that the Messiah was to "come again" to introduce what would evidently be the Jewish Kingdom. As the promised second coming did not materialise, the Jews gradually fell away from the movement. This is one of the most important explanations why subsequently there ensued a schism (S. p. 241) between

"Second coming."

the Jews and the Christians, though the movement is said to have originated among the Jews; and originally the Jews and the Christians were indistinguishable even at Rome, or, more correctly, the Messianist Jews of the time, through a mistake, were treated by later historians as Christians (*Annals* of Tacitus, 15^{44}. See also *Origins of Christianity*, pp. 20—23). A parallel is supplied from our recent experiences. A section of the Non-co-operators, forsooth, the most enthusiastic section of it, have fallen away from the movement as 'the Swarāj in a year,' the ectype of the kingdom of God at hand' has failed (S. p. 241) to make its appearance in the due time. The doctrine of *second coming* remained a part of the creed with the Gentiles all the same. The Holy Writ could not extricate itself from the text. A mass of contradictions, still remaining, shows that when once an inconvenient passage had been introduced, it could not be done away with (S. p. 240) on account of the adherents' general lack of critical reflection. And when the

critical spirit arose, as it must, and unsuitable manuscripts were destroyed, some copies always remained that retained it. Or, with the increased veneration for the written word the passage would subsequently be restored. This is corroborated by the fact that at the time of the Revision of the translation of the Bible numerous awkward old manuscripts were discovered by which the Authorised version has been somewhat discredited.

Why the passage was not removed.

2

Sir James Frazer in his "Golden Bough", a most learned book on mytho-anthropological lore, has, from a multitude of rites of different nations, shown (See also *Pagan Christs*) that at one stage of social evolution sacrifices of kings were a normal affair. To avert divine wrath has been the most prominent motive of human sacrifice. This lies at the base of the Christian as well of the Jewish religion. The kings would naturally try to pass off this tragic burden from their shoulders. At first, it was the first-born son who was to be substituted. "No one" says Sir Frazer, "could so well represent the King in his divine character as his son, who might be supposed to share the divine afflatus of his father. No one. therefore, could so appropriately die for the king, and through him, for the whole people, as the king's son" (*Golden Bough*, (abgd) p. 289-290). The Phœnician myth of "Ieoud," the "only-begotten" son of king Kronos, whom the Phœnicians call Israel, sacrificed by his father at a time of national danger after being treated as a king, points towards the historic roots of Christianity. Also the story of Abraham and Isaac. (See *Pagan Christs* and *Golden Bough*). "The prevailing Semitic rite of the sacrifice of the eldest son", says Dr. Seal, "was spiritualised in the early Christian consciousness as the sacrifice of the only-begotten Son of God" (V. C. p. 10) When the animal was substituted, the firstlings were insisted upon. In human sacrifices, on the other hand, voluntary victims were preferred and, as they say, Christ offered himself voluntarily.* In the Mahábhárata we have examples of willing sacrifices. In the Roman and Japanese history also, the voluntary victims came annually in time of emergency. Only the other day, a

King-sacrifice cult.

* Grant Allen suggests that our April Fool is the degraded but long forgotten relic of how ceremonial submission was assured. The victim was "originally sent on a fool's errand to the place of sacrifice, so that he might go voluntarily". (*Idea of God*, p. 317).

great Japanese patriot, General Nogi, did *hari kiri*, i. e., voluntarily sacrificed himself for the king and, through him, for the nation. In the case of animal sacrifice the sacrificial goat is made to bow its head as if in submission. As human sacrifices were thought more efficacious and as there was no knowing that willing victims would be always forth-coming, the slaves and war captives were freely used. But the idea of loss or suffering, the main characteristic of a sacrifice, is wanting here. So the victim "bought with a price"* was the next stage in the evolution of the practice.

Voluntary sacrifice.

"Bought with a price".

It is consistently with this idea, conscious or unconscious, that in our country, if one is to sacrifice an animal, it must be bought, it can not be a gift from somebody else. It is for this reason that the "price" has been made much of in the Bible. In order to pitchfork this price-episode into the sacrifice of Jesus that the absurd story of the betrayal by Judas (S. p. 280) has been introduced, thereby complicating the legend and exposing the legendry character of this fantastic tale. However, the king passed off his burden easily, but he could not so easily get rid of the 'voice within' with its uneasy reproach that another life was being taken when his should be sacrificed. So he would be prompted, as a measure of compromise, to save one life by releasing a condemned criminal. Thus it became a practice to let off, on the occasion, a prisoner already sentenced to death. Its reminiscence we find in the question of the Trial scene before Pilate—whom to release ?—Jesus † Barabbas (Son of the Father) or Jesus the Christ ? Does not this give us a broad hint as to the identification of the two ? But the bought victim may not be a willing one, that is the next difficulty. Therefore we pass on from the least appearance of coercion to willingness effected by persuasion. How was the willingness brought about ? A criminal or a desperate character would, with a promise of a period of absolute licence and abandon, be humoured to die for the community at the end of the period. ‡ This connects us with the legend that Jesus was slain as a criminal among criminals.

Release of condemned prisoner.

* The Khonds shout in the dying ear : "We have bought you with a price, no sin rests with us" [Ibid. p. 285].

† *Matt.* 23 [16] : Scholars agree that the full name was Jesus Barabbas, the first part having subsequently been dropped for reasons discussed below. But it is now being restored. Vide Moffat's *New Translation of the New Testament.*

‡ It is a common belief that if a man is condemned to death, for the period between the sentence and its execution, all his desires, whatever their nature, would be fulfilled at the Sirkar's own expense,

3

Son to die for all.

Sir J. G. Frazer quotes the following from Philo of Byblus' work on the Jews concerning the son-sacrifice among the Semites: "It was an ancient custom that the ruler of a city or nation should in a crisis of great danger give his beloved to die for the whole people, as a ransom to the avenging demons: and the children thus offered were slain with mystic rites" (work cited, p. 293). So many things we find here for consideration! At the traditional date when Christianity arose, the Jews were in great danger of being extinguished from the face of the earth by the oppression of the Romans ("demons"?) on the one hand and by their own fanaticism on the other. As a consequence their mind was highly strained over the one "beloved son" being sacrificed for the whole people and the gospels ratify this view (*John* 9[50]; 18[14]). We have a ready parallel here in India. We are eagerly desiring for the advent of the *Kalki-Avatár* or any of his substitutes, being goaded to that position by our helpless political condition. We hail any body as the *Avatár* who promises immediate release from the bondage. To spiritualise this sentiment is a very easy and natural course. Under the circumstances there is nothing to be astonished at if the customary Jesus-Barabbas sacrifice was at that time being performed by the Jews with dramatic splendour and accuracy. And in the Biblical narration we find a vivid description of it. If the entry into Jerusalem and the subsequent demonstrations had been of the nature of an actual event belonging to the life of the so-called Christ Jesus, then Roman authorities, who were the masters of the situation and not the High Priest and his underlings as the gospels ask us to believe, would have arrested and crucified him then and there without any ceremony. Otherwise these officers would have been held responsible for the abetment of sedition, and themselves hanged. And the Jews at the time were creating great political troubles. Of this Barabbas show, a part being suppressed and a part semi-spiritualised, it is no wonder that the 'ruler' of the universe would be made to sacrifice his 'beloved son' as a ransom for the world. And when we free the Eucharist as was practised among the early Christians from all its verbiage, what remains is simply the slaying of the Son-God "with mystic rites."

Jesus Barabbas.

Frazer fuses two cults.

The following excellent summary by Dr. Carpenter of this interesting incident as described in the *Golden Bough*, though very long, I can not resist the temptation to quote for more reasons than one: "Mr. Frazer does

not dispute the general facts of the Gospel narratives of the Passion, [as already shown (S. p. 279), the Passion is a transcription from the mystery-drama] but he attempts to give them a new interpretation, which may throw light on the subsequent belief in the Deity of Christ. Reduced to its simplest form, this theory supposes that at the feast of Purim which might fall a few weeks before Passover, Jews in Jerusalem had the practice of parading a criminal as a mock-king, who was crowned, scourged and hanged. This practice was a survival of a long series of usages, ultimately traceable through Persia to Babylonian ritual ; when the kings of Babylon were annually sacrificed as incarnations of the God of vegetable life who required a constant succession of vigorous human forms in whom to dwell. When Jesus was crucified, a part of this dying god was thrust upon him, and thus "impressed upon what had been hitherto mainly an ethical mission the character of a divine revelation culminating in the passion and death of the incarnate Son of a heavenly father," (*The First Three Gospels*, pp. 336-337). After quoting this the old Unitarian Doctor has protested a great deal. He wants a man-Jesus, but Frazer's conclusion offers him a god-symbol. But all his protests seem to us to be roaring almost as mildly as a dove. Because Dr. Carpenter has heaved a sigh of relief finding a reason how Jesus was deified. As a Unitarian this has been his prime necessity. But he has counted without his host. Here Dr. Frazer himself has come in for a severe rap over the knuckles. This is a misfortune for the world that a scientific scholar like Dr.

Frazer's contradiction.

Frazer is not immune from the virus of contemporary religious prepossessions. By his marvellous accumulation of facts he has pushed scientific hierology and anthropology a step forward, as Robertson has pointed out. But it is sad to contemplate that, as far as Christian origins are concerned, he has failed to give full effect to the generalisation that naturally follows from the facts he has himself so cleverly marshalled for other purposes. In the case of the gospel narrative which he takes for granted as historioal testifying to an indubitable human personality, Frazer composes two events—the crucifixion of Jesus, a man mainly with 'an ethical mission', and the sacramental slaying of the 'god of vegetable life,' by making the latter impress a part of his enactments on the former, which, it is evident, the gospel narrative refuses to justify. In order to render a satisfactory account of that narrative, neither the impression of the one on

the other, nor using the moral teacher as the god of vegetable life 'selected by the machinations of sacerdotal hostility' for that year's sacramental slaying, was necessary. But for the supreme necessity of keeping the *grandam* of tradition in good humour, Sir Frazar would not, one may swear, have resorted to such a circuitous or complicated method of interpretation. Apart from the contradictions he has committed by far-fetched surmises as to the dates (vide P. C. p. 145)—dates which are absolutely necessary for accommodating Purim and Passover (the contradiction being unavoidable from the fact that when one thing is taken to be two, there must be a collision in time and space : two things can not occupy the same space at the same time), it is a mystery that his highly trained scientific intellect has overlooked the difficulty of accepting the historicity of the story of Jesus with the minutely detailed account of crucifixion. Because, in the narrative, there is not the slightest reference to the other festival of which, according to his own showing, the crucifixion has somehow become a part. The divine moral teacher as a sacrificed mock-king is an incongruous idea. We do not actually find two incidents, the one real and the other sham. The gospel legend records only two incidents of the mock-king festival—the triumphal entry and, in a week's time, crucifixion (see supra Chap. xiv). They would be absolutely incompatible, if they were events of an actual life. And a real entry with pomp and pageantry necessarily planned and organised from beforehand as described, would be at once interfered with by Pilate without any complaint from the priests. Sir Frazer himself admits that without the back-ground of the festival, crucifixion is totally unintelligible. But the two can not be composed and the gospels describe only one affair. Have not the gospellers altogether misrepresented or misunderstood this sacrificial rite ? The biographical school is in a fix. The solution lies in the giving up of the traditional superstition concerning the origin of Christianity. Grant Allen, though he began with the same inherited prejudice,—"that unassailable Rock of solid historical fact" (p. 16), but led by "endless facts as to such man-gods themselves", supplied by Frazer's "two large and fascinating volumes" (p. 245), has been driven to the following admission : "We are now in a very different position. We had then [at the outset of the enquiry] to accept crudely the bare fact of a certain cult of a Divine man, Jesus, isolated and unrelated in its naked singularity. We can now see that it was but one more example

Entry and Crucifixion inconsistent

of a universal god-making tendency in human nature" (pp. 391-392). He ultimately surrenders to the irresistible conclusion: "In fact I believe the Christian legend to have been mainly constructed out of the details of such early god-making sacrifices: I hold that Christ is essentially one such artificial god" (p. 285). Dr. Carpenter, following upon the wrong clue supplied by Dr. Frazer, has adopted the view of the deification of Jesus on the basis of a moral teacher. Both of them have forgotten that the textual criticism of the Bible has left nothing to the teacher, not a single teaching has been found authentic, not to speak of the contradictions. While the broad question—whether Jesus was a teacher, or a Messiah or a visionary with a few teachings on 'last things', still remains undetrmined. Both of them have built their castles on the air. Verily, Christianity is not a new thing, but a continuation, under a new designation, of the old sacrificial sacrament with all its paraphernalia held intact. Those who have had the opportunity to compare the religious ceremonials of the early Church with those of Attis-Adonis-Mithra-Dionysos-cults can not withhold this conclusion. In all these cults, Deities were not historical persons, and their votaries prayed as fervently. They too sometimes immolated themselves. So it is unhistorical, on any account, to claim historicity for the Christian Deity, though, it is true, the above-mentioned Deities too were once taken to be historical persons and their historicity was equally fiercely defended. I again quote from Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God*: "As a matter of fact, Christianity may be regarded historically as a magma [S. p. 3] of the most fundamental religious ideas of the Mediterranean basin, and especially of the Eastern Mediterranean, grafted on to the Jewish cult and the Jewish scriptures, and clustering round the personality of the man-god, Jesus. It is interesting, therefore, to note that in Syria and the north Semitic area the principal cult was the cult of just such a slain man-god, Adonis—originally, as Mr. Frazer shows, an annually slain man-god, afterwards put to death and bewailed in effigy, after a fashion of which we shall see not a few examples in the sequel [i. e., in the history of the Church], and of which the Mass itself is but an etherealised survival" (pp. 244-245). We know that the Mass is a development from the possibly unsacerdotal Agape-feasts. Not to speak of the orthodox, even among the heretics of the pre-Christian Israelites, a Holy Supper of bread and wine following upon the symbolic sacrifice of the firstling lamb, was known. And

Deification theory untenable.

Pre-Christian Eucharist.

the Christian wine-blood sacrament can be traced to Philo's mystical sacrifice of the Logos, God's first-born "who pours a portion of blood" (P. C. p. 178). Originally connected with human sacrifice (vide *Note*, p. 78), it is by way of refining upon the earlier practice of flesh-eating that bread has been substituted. In the Fourth gospel the crucified One (in v. 1^{29}, actually), is the paschal sacrifice being the Lamb of God, metaporically so called, to take away the sin of the world, but so by suggestion only, in v. 19^{36} : "A bone of him shall not be broken." It is an attribute of the slain paschal lamb (*Ex.* 12^{46} ; *Num.* 9^{12} ; *Ps.* 34^{20}. This symbolic sacrifice and paschal lamb-eating reaches its acme, both metaphorically and theologically, in 6^{48-56}, beginning with, "I am the bread of life" and ending in, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him." The symbolism is complete here. Yet John does not surrender his idea of Logos whose flesh is the life of the world. The repetitions are ritualistic and the form runs through the rituals of the Khonds as well as of the pre-Christian Mexicans. As John makes his crucified One the last sacrifice, the Passover could not be eaten before all was over (18^{28}). But this subtlety did not enter the brains of the synoptists. They make Jesus eat the Passover with his disciples (*Mk.* 14^{16} ; 26^{19} ; *Lk.* 22^{15}) before the crisis overtakes him. And in the Christian legend it was necessitated by the god's instituting his own Eucharist himself. John insists *ad nauseam* on eating the flesh of the god. But he played the second fiddle only. The pre-Christian Mexicans with some others led the way. "Broadly the God entertains the sacrificer at the sacrifice through the sacrificial meal, and when the slave, as so often happens, represents the God to whom he is sacrificed the eating of his flesh is an eating of the God's" (J. G. Muller as quoted in P. C., p. 144).

God-eating, physical.

Those who think that God-eating, originally a spiritual affair, has been turned into a superstitious sacrament, read history upside down. They spiritualise a material event. Jesus eats the Passover ! Is it not God eating himself ? Yes, "as the God is supposed to partake of the victim offered to him, it follows that, when the victim is the God's own self, the God eats of his own flesh" (G. B. ii, 167, see also p. 389 above). As the Christian Eucharist was early cast into the mould of the Jewish Passover, it could not in this respect go the whole hog with the cult of the goat-eating Dionysos. In the latter "we have the strange spectacle of a God sacrificed to himself on the ground that he is his own enemy (quoted in P. C. p. 142). This has got a highly metaphysical aspect of

its own reminding us of the Gitá's "आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः", the self (lower) must therefore be sacrificed to the Self (higher) so that the former be incorporated with the latter. But this is no place to theologise metaphsically. Now one other point should not be missed. That is about the "raising up" at the last day as given in the John's gospel (6[54]). Dr. Priestly once dogmatically told an ignorant Christian world that if Jesus had not risen, we should have no knowledge of immortality. In reality, we find that "the idea of resurrection, developed as a doctrine of individual immortality [reincarnation ?] from the primary conception of the annual rivival of vegetation, had become part of the mystery rituals of Osiris and Dionysos, and of the Eleusinia, long before the Christian era" (P. C. p. 144). The Christian Bible says, and the world in its simplicity has persuaded itself to believe, that Jesus instituted the Holy Supper and therefore Christians observe it. But now whoever cares to know knows Eucharist to be a custom going back to the night of history and since observed all over the world in one form or another. "People do not usually observe a custom because on a particular occasion a mythical being is said to have acted in a certain way. But, on the contrary", generalises Dr. Frazer, "they very often invent myths to explain why they practise certain customs." (G, B., Vol ii. p. 420). And the Christian myth of Eucharist can not be an exception to this general principle.

4

King Karabas !

We have referred to Jesus-Barabbas festival. A description of this crucifixion-story is found in Philo ; "There was a certain mad man named Karabas. * They, driving the poor wretch as far as the public gymnasium and setting him up there on high that he might be seen of every body, flattened out a leaf of papyrus and put it on his head instead of a diadem,—and when he had been dressed and adorned like a King............then others came up, some as if to salute him.........Then from the multitude of those who were standing around arose a wonderful shout of men calling out Maris ; and this is the name by which it is said they call the king among the Syrians." Now a question is put to Dr. Frazer. If everyththing is impressed from without, then where real

* While quoting the passage to show that Jesus' mock-crowning etc. were indented from Alexandria as many an article of this nature was so indented, Robinson Smith identifies (*Solution of the Synoptic Problem*, p. 54) Barabbas with Karabas, "the Hebrew K very closely resembling the B". Friedlander says

Jesus comes in ? Even Jesus the Son of the Father (Jesus Barabbas) † is actually introduced into the gospels from outside. Yes, his hypothesis of 'impression' could never have been mooted but for the original sin of uncritically taking an unhistorical tradition for granted as true !

Why does, on the other hand, Jesus Barabbas of the sacrificial festival refuse to be suppressed, in spite of all attempts to suppress him ? The gospels have been ultimately obliged to refer to him in connexion with the trial of Jesus, and this reference too has been subsequently done away with. Vide Drucker's *Trials of Jesus*. He was smuggled out only to be eventually smuggled into the story. But the jugglery has been too openly performed too escape detection. Many curious suggestions have been made to explain away this inconvenient juxtaposition of two *Jesuses*, both *the son of the father*. A. E. J. Rawlinson (*S. Mark*) disposes of it by introducing the followers of Jesus Barabbas who came to the place of the trial to pray for the release of their leader. A. C Clark thinks it a blunder due to dittography (S. G. vol. i, p. 377). The historicists are in the habit of making all sorts of fanciful hypotheses except the right one. Fancy, a Roman Governor, when "as the representative of Cæsar he had the power to nominate or dismiss the high priest, a power which was frequently exercised" (W. D. Morrison, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 133) released a murderous rebel at the sweet will of the priests, but executed a man whom he believed to be innocent, and protested to the effect. This is unthinkable, so says Dr. Stromholm : "The eminently good-natured Pilate, whom the Jewish Council had to force to punish a pretender to the throne is a sheer historical

Historicists' wrong clue.

(*The Jewish Sources*, p. xii) : "It is a very short step from Karabas to Barabbas, if one bears in mind that in Hebrew or Aramaic K is very similar to B". Both of them, perhaps, commit the mistake of taking Karabas to be the original. Philo being an Alexandrian Jew, it is very likely, he took the idea of the incident from the home-land and adapted it to his the then circumstances.

† Dr. Israel Abrahams in his Second Series (p. 201) says : "The name occurs in all gospels (cp. Mk. xv, 7 ; Lk. xxiii, 18 ; Jn. xviii, 40). The question as to authenticity of the reading "Jesus" in front of Barabbas has been answered in the affirmative by F. C. Burkitt in his valuable note and many authorities are of the same opinion." The word is generally taken to mean "the son of the father." Dr. Abrahams views with favour the meaning—Jesus the son of Abraham. It is not unlikely that the memory of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac still lingered in the Jewish mind in connection with the Jesus Barabbas sacrifice. And Isaac, like our Sree Rama, may be taken as the typical son of the father. This is a mere suggestion of ours.

impossibility" (*Riddle of the New Testament*). At the present time the British Ráj in India most closely resembles the Roman Imperium of those days. Now imagine that an open insurrection takes place in an Indian Province, say Bengal, with murder, but the British governor discharges the insurgent leader because of the clamour of the mob! No, the story of the release of Jesus Barabbas is a purposive canard. In noticing W. A. Campbell's *Did the Jews Kill Jesus?* Robertson concludes that the book enforces the idea that "the story of the Crucifixon is unhistorical alike on legal and social grounds; Jesus not being anti-Jewish, the Sanhedrin having long been averse from any such acts of savagery, and a Roman governor such as Pilate being the last man in the world to execute a prisoner under the circumstances alleged." (L. G., June 1927).

[We have already commented on the Trial (Ch. XVI). Here are a few more drops from the ocean which has been veritably dredged by Montefiore. Almost all critics agree to call it "obscure and dubious," "very doubtful," "full of difficulties and improbabilities" or "hardly conceivable." The election of the high priest is not annual, as John makes it. That is an Ephesian custom. It is said, in the Sanhedrin "all the chief priests" etc. were present. Menzies observes: "There was but one. For a trial for life the court consisted of twenty-three members and not of the whole Sanhedrin, nor was the house of the high priest the right place for the court to hold its sitting. No such trial might be held at night nor on a festival day; nor could the arrest be made on the First Night of Passover". These are little illegalities! A further little irregularity is that the court is both prosecutor and judge. Jesus is said to have been condemned either for his assertion about destroying and rebuilding the Temple or his confession of Messiahship or both, but "neither of them, according to Rabbinic law, constituted blasphemy" (S. G. vol. i, p. 355). Why were untutored "false witnesses" produced that they disagreed? They were purposely made to disagree to prove Jesus 'not guilty,' and they made 'false' statements because of an Old Testament motive. The Psalmist says: "False witnesses are risen up against me" (27^{12}; also 35^{11}). And "that the Messiah would build up the Temple again was a Jewish idea after 70" (p. 357). Dr. Hirsch who points out all the irregularities and illegalities alluded to above, after enumerating a dozen conditions to be observed by a Jewish tribunal when the death sentence is concerned and the violation of which would brand the court "as composed of

Absurdities of Trial stories.

murderers", shows that these conditions, one and all, have been set at naught in the trial of the gospel Jesus. Dr. K. C. Anderson affirms: "At the time when the trial and execution are supposed to have taken place none of the Jewish priests were judicial officers or members of the Sanhedrin; and Sanhedrin itself had no criminal jurisdiction" (*Monist*, July 1924). Yes, the priests did not constitute the Jewish authorities to move the Roman Governor who, it is related, though convinced of Jesus' innocence, most unwarrantably handed him over to them to be executed then and there against the Tiberian law, enacted only twelve years previously, in favour of the condemned prisoner to the effect that execution should be deferred ten days after the sentence. And it was Emperor Tiberius who appointed Pilate (*Rationalist Annual*: 1927). Is it imaginable that a Hindu who has spoken against idolatry would be handed over by a British Governor to the clamourous priests to be hanged? And the situations are exactly parallel. The formal condemnation in *Mark* is regarded unhistorical by R. W. Husband (*Prosecution of Jesus*). Loisy says: "In the story of the trial before Pilate the formal accusation is wanting at the beginning, and the condemnation at the end" (S. G., vol. i, p. 369; E. S., vol. i, p. 103). Yet by Jesus' confession a way was made open for Pilate. Mocking by the soldiers was quite against Roman discipline. It must have been a part of some mocking carnival, and also seems "to have been drawn up to show an accomplishment of prophecies" (*Ibid*). Why are all these irregularities and illegalities, absurdities and discrepancies there in a narrative alleged to have been related by "eyewitnesses" (*Lk.* 1[2]) or their equivalents? Because a ceremonial festival has been dramatised into history trying to retain all the main features of the ritual. This is the only answer. After analysing the Trial Scene into its constituent elements Loisy gives his verdict categorically: "All these are traits that belong rather to legendary fiction than to history, and rather resemble a theatrical effect in a melodrama or in a childish play than historical reality" (E. S. ii, p. 644; S. G. i, p. 375).

Scene impossible.

Then the other difficulty viewed from another standpoint. "Was it likely", cross-examines Mr. Friedlander, "that Pilate would have attempted to save Jesus, by substituting Barabbas? | To ring-leader of an insurrection who had committed murder 'thus making his action'—his offer to release Barabbas—'doubly inconceivable' H. J. p. 171|. Was it possible for Roman Judge to acknowledge to the world that he had made a judicial error? This would be the meaning of putting Barabbas to death in place of Jesus. Such a procedure, in the case of a man of Pilate's harsh and proud

nature, is psychologically unthinkable." Then, what is the meaning of the anomalous introduction of Barabbas here in this connection ? Mr. Friendlander answers by an interrogation : "Does this not suggest that originally Jesus and Barabbas were one and the same person" ? (p. xii). But we shall draw out a direct affirmative answer by psycho-analytical treatment of the dying patient of the gospel narrative.

We have already seen (S. p. 356) that the name, Jesus, was used as "the God of the Hebrews" in an adjuration cult, and the supreme God was once worshipped by that name. In the Talmud mention is made of a Jewish ritual—'Week of the Son', called by some as Jesus the Son—in connection with the circumcision and redemption of the first-born male child. Then comes the five days' festival of the sacrificed mock-king as embodied in the Jesus-Barabbas rite. All this unmistakably points to "a body of Jesus-lore of some kind prior to the gospel story" (J. P. p. 88). Dr. Smith takes his stand on this unshakable ground in his *Pre-Christian Jesus* in order to explain the phrase – "the things concerning the Jesus" repeatedly occurring in the gospels and the *Acts* (*Mk*. 5^{27} : *Lk*, 24^{19} ; *Acts* 18^{25} : 28^{31}). With the latter-day monotheistic Judaism an extra god-name could not last long. Evemerisation must set in. In course of time many deities were humanised. And the tendency is not confined to Judæa only. In India this monotheistic propensity has reduced even such manifest natural forces as *Indra*, *Chandra*, *Váyu*, *Varuna* etc., to historical persons (vide the late Pandit Umesh Chandra Vidyáratna's writings), or has explained them away (vide *Satyártha Prakás'* of Swámi Dayánanda). The process began with a demi-god, a non-historical Jesus, 'the Servant of God' (vide *Didáché*). He was evolved from a remote Jesus-God evemerised, afterwards as Joshua. And the Nazarenes did not accept any prophet later than Joshua (see *infra* p. 407). His adherents performed a secret symbolic sacrament reminiscent of an ancient ceremony of human sacrifice—a god sacrificed to god as in hundred primitive cults. Ultimately it was reduced to the Jesus-Barabbas rite.

Barabbas a patch in the gospels.

Barabbas as introduced in the gospels is an ostensible patch and, for the historicist, a most inconvenient incident to manage. Details are everywhere wanting where absolutely necessary. But here we get unnecessary details which could better be spared. So, Wendland considers the gospel narrative concerning Barabbas to be quite unhistorical (*Jewish Sources*, p. xii). The unhistorical nature of the story of Barabbas is admitted even by M. Loisy, though reluctantly : "Neither these details nor which follow," Loisy remarks in his *Jesus et la*

tradition, "in regard to the anecdotes of Barabbas seem discussible from the point of view of history". Yes, the story is intelligible only as an attempt to counter the Jewish protest that the Jesus of the gospels is a visible elevation to independent status of the Jesus Barabbas of an ancient and familiar annual festival. To hail the "Son of David" with royal reception and then forthwith sit down to prepare for his crucifixion may fittingly form a part of a drama, or enter into a festival usage, but can never be a real human history (S. CH. xvi). All the same we, for ourselves, do not feel at all embarrassed by its unhistoricity, as we have scarcely found a single historical item to deal with in the gospels. If the Biblical account were a biography, even then the Barabbas episode would be not only unhistorical but enigmatical to the extreme. We, of course, know its history and that from the view-point of the myth-theory, and this is the only explanation possible if any explanation is forthcoming at all. The gospel narrative is the meeting ground of many myths ; one of them is the cult of Jesus Barabbas. His crucifixion has been delineated by the evangelists--drawing upon the universal myth-foundry accessible to them in manifold ways. Of course, it is not contended that the then recent historic crucifixion and scourging of Antigonus, the last Asmonean king of the Jews, by Mark Antony, could not have supplied them a motive from a quite different channel. Why does then the story vary from gospel to gospel, the sceptic may ask ? But the answer is easy (S. p. 371). The traditions and rituals of different places were not necessarily the same, not were the gospels issued from the same centre ; all the writers were not actuated by the same motive, nor were all the myth-sources available to them all in an equal degree ; all the evangelists were not of the same mental calibre, nor is it expected that they would utilise the materials equally successfully. One evidently tried to raise the sufferings of the Messiah to the highest pitch, the other's main concern was perhaps centered in maintaining his god-head at any cost. But there is no doubt that the conception of Jesus as a sacrificed god is the very life-breath of the Christian propaganda and that Jesus is the Son of God the Father. Barabbas also means the Son of the Father, and from Philo's description we get the crucifixion of a mock-king of that name, a reproduction of which description is seen in Lang's *Magic and Religion*, p. 303. This is the key that unlocks the chest of the mystery. Sir Frazer's theory of 'impression' of the mock-king upon the so-called real crucifixion sacrifices the scientific principle of mythology at the altar of a popular superstition. It is this very Barabbas

rite, out of which the Christian propaganda of the sacrificed god arises. Mock king, mock crucifixion, mock burial, mock resurrection, mock ascension—all are enacted in the drama and have all been bodily transcribed into 'the good tidings'! History awards it and science ratifies it. It is not yet finally ascertained whether at that time there was an actual man-sarifice, open or secret, sacramental or otherwise. Any conclusive evidence is not forth-coming on that point. But there is no reasonable doubt as to the vicarious sacrifice for the whole people, associated with the vicarious eating of the flesh, of which the Christian Eucharist is the proof positive.

Science sacrificed for superstition.

The logical import of the gospel story of Barabbas is that there was a custom to give up to the people, at the time of the Passover (a sacrifice of firstling) or on any other festive occasion, either for religious masquerade or sacrifice, a prisoner who was to play the part of the Son in the Jesus Barabbas rite. "Son of the Father," on the other hand, points to the old Semitic cult in which the King's son was sacrificed by or for his father. The name of Jesus, through variations, is somehow connected with the name Isaac and Isaac was sacrificed by his father, Abraham, who, it is tolerably certain, is an evemerised god, and such a sacrifice is a sacrifice for the world. Jesus or Joshua was also an ancient deity. Now, if in any Jewish community, there was such a sacrifical rite of Jesus the Son of the Father, the son representing the father, God in the place of God—God being sacrificed to himself in reminiscence of the spirit of the primitive 'sympathetic magic' which is really a cult of the annual death of the Jesus-god in the line of Attis or Tammuz—then not only the adventitious reference to Jesus Barabbas, but the whole of the gospel myth of crucifixion becomes as clear as daylight. But how did a criminal serve such a sacred purpose? To avoid this difficulty, the mock crowning was introduced that the prisoner being paraded as a king would ritually acquire the virtue of such an august personage. We have already discussed how a man made free with royal prerogative, nay, even an animal (cp. the horse of *Aśvamedha*, S. 79, and the sacrifical goat) would, in the eyes of the people, gain the sanctity of a holy being. The gospel Crucified is also a holy criminal.

Meaning of Barabbas episode.

Now, when the gospel Jesus was preached, it goes without saying that the generality of the public took him for the Jesus of the Barabbas sacrifice with which they were perfectly familiar. Now, the only way out of this difficulty was to connect Jesus Barabbas

with this divine drama, so that the one could not be confused with the other. That was the only means by which Jesus Christ could be distinctly known from Jesus Barabbas, and this vexatious question given a quietus. It will not be out of place to remark that, in this connection, we get two Jesuses—one is the son of the father and the other the Son of God, the father. Would it be very strange if the doings of the two were mixed up together? One Jesus was crucified and buried and the other returned from the death's door—the two being fused one into the other, what harm that the resurrection myth would get an additional accession of strength, and the joint effect would be the story of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus described in the gospels? A story gathers in volume in this way. How has our Krishna legend come to its present size? We know, many Krishna tales and cults have contributed to it. (Vide Pandit Tattvabhusan's *Krishna and the Gita*, and the present writer's Bengali treatise). We are not, however, hereby barred from laying hands on other myth-stories about the resurrection. The Biblical crucifixion and after is an inexhaustible store-house of myth-formations which we have already touched upon from time to time in their proper places. The symbolic representation of a nature-myth in the three acts of a drama—death, burial and resurrection—was a common feature of almost all eastern religions with which the origin of Christianity was bound by filial ties. See *Introduction* and other places.

Raison d'être of the entry of Barabbas into the gospel.

We have now got the history how Jesus Barabbas came to his own. But why was the prefixed "Jesus" eliminated from the current text (*Matt.* 27[17])? The reason is evident. When Christianity had already had a firm footing, the two *Jesuses*—one a criminal and the other the Christ, but both in a way 'the son of the father' appearing in the same context, were reasonably taken exception to by the pious Christian who, by this time, had forgotten all about the Jesus-Barabbas rite. Do we not take offence if the servant bears the same name with a member of the house? The servant is made to change his name. So a part of the name of the criminal was erased in order to satisfy the pious susceptibilities. But the *raison d'être* of the introduction of what was afterwards found so great a stumbling block as to compel its ultimate elision must have been grave enough and its history, we have seen, lays bare the mythical character of the gospel narrative. The biographical school has no other explanation to offer than that it is unhistorical.

In conclusion it needs to be most emphatically told that the gospel narrative is a misinterpretation of a ritual, at least, in its most vital points—the Passion and the Crucifixion. From the ritual a myth naturally springs. But a myth can not be made to yield history, much less a biography. The origin of a myth is generally forgotten; because it is hidden in the darkness of past ages, and the human mind does not like to be suspended in the air. The tendency to historicise may almost be called a universal obsession of the human mind and it must interpret only from its own point of view. So every story becomes anthropomorphic. There lies the root-cause of all confusions. Man is surrounded by countless objects in nature—wind and water, trees and animals, stars and plants—he draws his inspiration from all. So straightway he endows them all with human attributes. If he gives up insisting upon historicity, the tale of the myth is easily told: "Originally the death of the God was nothing else than the death of the anthropic victim; but when," rightly observes Mr. Robertson Smith, "this ceased to be understood, it was thought that the piacular sacrifice represented a historical tragedy in which the god was killed" (*Semites*, p 410). No god is ever killed except it be in a myth.

Ritual misinterpreted.

5

Guided by the cue supplied by Mr. Robertson, Whittaker elaborates his myth-theory starting from the purely Judaic stand-point. Notwithstanding his conviction that there is absolutely no historical evidence as to the existence of a personal Christ, he was not unwilling to work with the hypothesis that round an historical person legends grew up. But overwhelming evidences to the contrary were found to stand in the way of building on this unverified conjecture. With Robertson he holds that the Christian community started at some pre-Christian date with the cult of a Jesus or Joshua conceived as possessing divine nature. "The story of a quasi-historic Jesus", he says, "grew out of immemorial elements of native Semitic ritual and myth which now rose to the surface after ages of obscure persistence beneath the official and Pharisaic Jewish religion" (*The Origins of Christianity*, p. 24). When this story was combined with similar stories of the wider Hellenistic world a definite myth was formed. And this view is confirmed by Grant Allen who, from history, shows that Christianity holds in solution many elements contributed by the mass of the people even in Judæa itself—elements which, though discountenanced by the priests of official Yahweh-worship,

Historical person no desideratum for the gospel narrative.

formed integral parts of the popular and even the recognised religion (S. p. 354). That Christianity in its inception and early phases was simply a heretical form of Judaism and not a new religion, as uninformed people would have us believe, is quite evident from the following apology of St. Paul: "After the way which they call a sect (or heresy) so I serve the God of our fathers." Instead of averring his faith in a new religion, Paul insists on his belief in "all things which are according to the law and which are written in the prophets" (*Acts*, 24[14]). He was taken to be "a ring-leader of the sect of Nazarenes" (*Acts*, 24[5]). And this sect of Nazarenes (S. 402) was actually a pre-Christian organisation of Judaism not at all cut off from the orthodox moorings. "Their orthodoxy was so extreme", says Dr. Brandes, "that they recognised no authority subsequent to that of Joshua, whose name is identical with that of Jesus" (*Jesus: A Myth*, p. 91). No wonder then that this sect previously devoted to a form of Jesus-cult would afterwards be termed Christists or Christians (vide *Addendum*). All this points to the one only conclusion that Christianity had its origin in some pre-Chirstsan religious persuasion and not in any particular person. Even the very name 'Christian' was in a way connected with the pre-Christian Messianic Jews whose apocalyptic expectations about the coming of the Messiah, the Anointed King (the Christ, "Christus" or "Chrestus" giving the same pronunciation in Greek), accompained by the dissolution of the world State amid slaughter and universal conflagration caused a great deal of fanaticism on both sides in the Roman Empire. The Messianists perhaps thought that by incendiarism they could hasten the day of the 'advent.' Seutonius the historian, according to Whittaker, evidently thought that the Jews had been rioting under the incitement of a party leader named Chrestus. In those days, because of the utter lack of critical method, when the Christian community was formed much later on, some misunderstanding arose as to the historical origin of Christianity, because of foisting the enactments of apocalyptic Jews on the Christians. From up-to-date historical criticism Whittaker conclusively proves that for this misunderstanding Tacitus himself was to a degree responsible, "who, from the identity of names, had confused the Messianists of Nero's time with the new sect of Christians in the time of Trajan" (p. 22-23).

Ancients ignorant of gospel origins.

Verily, of the actual origin of the historical Christianity, we in the twentieth century know as much or as little as the Christians or Pagans in the second century. No, we know more. Tacitus informs us from out-side and the Third gospeller from within of "those things which are

most surely believed" by the Christian church at the time. This belief is the foundation-stone of Christinity and it was founded on a rumour. The false rumour could not merely be of the resurrection of any historical person, but it must have been about the promised Messiah as a whole who had already appeared, suffered, died and risen again from the dead. At or about that time the Roman Government, so repressive of the Jewish nationalist aspirations, executed many Messianic leaders. And this supplied the historical nucleus. Any historical person whom others had seen, felt and touched, could not serve the purpose. Jesus as depicted in the gospels was an afterthought necessarily occurring under the exigencies of the situation (S. 151). However, the rumour spread like wild fire from centre to centre of the Messianic Jews with which the Empire was honey-combed. And they were only waiting for it to swallow it tooth and nail to counter the Messianist claims of Augustus (S. p. 329). It is for this reason that the first missionaries saw disciples wherever they went. And it is also for the same reason that we find Paul's epistles addressed to so many different groups of people with the conspicuous exception of the Galileans whose unchallengeable right it would have been to claim the very first epistle (S. p. 366) had any historical Jesus ever lived and preached. The movement was mighty because it issued at the same time from different centres and was influenced by different forces, so much so that the narrow personality of Jesus, as we find it depicted in the gospels and which we have already pointed out several times, does not explain it at all. And this could not possibly happen until the complete Dispersion of the Jews brought about by the fall of the Temple at 70 A. D. Because, as Whittaker points out in this connection, the idea of a world religion, Judaism not yet having such a legitimate successor in the orthodox line, could not be conceived, much less sanctioned, until the priest-hood of Jerusalem had been destroyed and the exclusively Judaic theocratic expectations altogether abandoned or substantially weakened.

Pre-Christian disciples of 'Jesus'.

The rumour of the coming of the promised Messiah, as already an accomplished fact, set the popular imagination at work, and "around this nucleus there clustered stories of the fulfilment of Messianic prophecies and adaptation of pagan myths" (O. Ch., p. 211). There is absolutely no doubt that the gospels were composed in pagan surroundings to best supply the writers with pagan materials. We do not now wonder that the rumour about

Rumour of the promised Messiah and other old materials for the myth.

the Gándhi Ráj firmly established in Hind, so sedulously spread among them, would lead the unsophisticated Assam coolies to easily come down, their minds fed up with all the imaginary advantages of that Ráj. And not the coolie-mind alone, as we have already shown (S. p. 136). However, Mr. Whittaker traces a Messianic prophecy to the *Sibylline Oracles* which actually identifies the old with the new Jesus : "Now a certain excellent man shall come again from heaven, who spread forth his hands upon the very fruitful tree, the best of the Hebrews, who once made the sun standstill speaking with beauteous words and pure lips" (p. 24). The very idea of "fruitful tree" implies some sacrificial cult which has been made manifest by Dr. Frazer in his *Golden Bough*, and the term "beauteous words and pure lips" indicates that the sacrificial victim is now being metamorphosed into a teaching God. Even if the *Oracles* in its present form is taken to be an interpolated Christian version of it (vide *Encyclopaèdia Biblica* under "Apocalyptic Literature"), its value can not be minimised as, in that case, the old Joshua (Jesus ?) is only found to be turned into the new Jesus by the Christian hand. Is not man the maker of his God? Dr. Drews also gives his powerful support to this view : "Here again the figures of Jesus and Joshua are blended, and we learn from the passage that they identified the Old Testament Joshua not only with the "crucified" servant of God, but also with the Messiah descending from heaven." (*Witnesses*, p. 222). The Epistle of Jude also (*Radical Views*) tells the same tale : "Now I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, how that Jesus [Joshua], having saved a people out of the land of Egypt the second time [Moses being the first saviour. This shows that Moses, Joshua etc. were early gods or demigods afterwards humanised during the revision of the Old Testament], destroyed them that believed not". The next verse (6) implies that this Jesus or Joshua is not a mere national hero : "And angels, which kept not their principality but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day". No human being but some supernatural agent only could punish the refractory angels. Here on the Jewish ground, then, we have had a deliverer with "divine name and attributes" for further development. So, no scholar worth the name now accepts Dr. Frazer's far-fetched view already criticised. He propounded this view, going out of his own way and in explanation of the Christian cult, simply to satisfy a popular clamour. In effect, Frazer supposes that the idea of the sacrificial God got a surreptitious infusion of new blood through the death of an actual moral teacher and preacher. Nothing of the kind. The events

narrated in the Bible did not historically take place. As we have already shown, the story related in the gospels only condenses in one human personality certain prominent phases of abstract religion. Mr. Whittaker tersely summarises the whole narrative in the following neat sentences: "The human victim is crucified as the incarnation of God. He has the attributes of a corn-god and of a wine-god; hence his body and blood can be partaken of sacramentally by eating bread and drinking wine. He rises again from the dead. His death and resurrection are celebrated annually, at the season when celebrations of the death and new birth of deities—whether representative of the forces of vegetation or of the power of the sun—are usual. With this most archaic conception, according to which the god is slain in his prime so that he may regain his vigour in a new manifestation, the piacular idea is combined. Sinless himself, he made a sacrifice for the sins of others. His death, therefore, coincides in time with an old piacular rite, the Passover, probably itself derived from a custom of human sacrifice. Then, since the new religion of Incarnate God adopts the sacred books of its predecessor as its own, all other conceptions have to be reconciled with Jewish monotheism. Hence the problem of the Christian theology, handed down from the New Testament to the Fathers and from the Fathers to the Schoolmen" (*The Origins of Christianity*, p. 26). So we find: There are Jesuses, there are Christs, and there are their mythical amalgamations; but there is found no such historical person as Jesus Christ. And it is more than proved that the founder of historical Christianity is not any historical Jesus but the idea of a coming Christ. Therefore we find precious little about the details of the founder's life in Palestine from the first Christians who, on the contrary, only gloated over the glory of the Christ who would appear a second time. This silence could not be accounted for if the founder were an historical person. Its implication is obvious.

No personal Jesus but ideal Christ.

Addendum

Anent the Nazareth myth : This myth several times came in for discussion in the foregoing pages. The mention of all such places as Bethlehem, Egypt, and Nazareth from which the term *Nazarene* is shown to be derived (S. pp. 204-205), having all been found mythically or prophetically grounded, the topography of the gospels is wholly discredited. A desperate attempt has been made—a forlorn hope to fill up the gap of the early years of that profound void generally known as the historical Jesus, by inventing his connection with these places which historicity demands. But Nazareth does not exist even as a geographical entity. Cheyne declares : 'No such town as Nazareth is mentioned in the Old Testament, in Josephus, or in the Talmud' (*Encyc. Biblica*, s. v. 'Nazareth', col. 3360). Cf. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, (Revised Ed. 1927) vol. ii, p. 11 : "The birth at Bethlehem and the journey to Egypt were apparently invented to make unreal fulfilments of misconceived prophetic passages. Finally, even the dwelling in Nazareth is made such a fulfilment. What it fulfils is, however, very obscure, as there is no passage in the prophets which says that the Messiah shall be called a Nazarene."

Gospel topography discredited (S. p. 370).

Christianity and misinterpretation of scriptures.

No more proof is required to show that it is from such misconceptions that Christianity, popularly so known, started. Here I am tempted, by the way, to draw the attention of the reader to the following ill-conceived remark of Dr. J. N. Farquhar on the Árya Samáj movement : "There is no risk involved in prophesying that the Samaj will not have a great history. In the very sources of its present strength there is that which will inevitably lead to its ruin. The false interpretation of the Vedas, on which the whole structure rests, will inevitably crumble as enlightenment proceeds." (*Modern Religious Movements in India*, p. 127). They say it is not safe to throw stones on others, living in a glass-house. Mr. Farquhar has here gone beyond his depths. Is not Christianity broad-based on the false interpretation of the Old Testament ? If this ill-informed protagonist of the Christian Mission has not sufficient enlightenment on this point, "there is no risk involved in" promising that the "Search of Jesus Christ" will bring him that enlightenment. It is really very unfortunate that a Professor of comparative theology will need a little illumination on the Philosophy of History, especially on its religious

Árya Samáj and misinterpretation of Vedas.

side. Has not Christianity a great history of the past two thousand years behind its back in spite of these blameful burdens on its shoulders? Then what is the harm that the Árya Samáj movement would have a similar great history in the future, even if the doctor's view of the Samaj be taken as true? This is not the occasion to in detail consider such a serious question of Sociology. But, I hope, Pundit Chamupati of the *Vedic Magazine* will not fail to meet him on his own ground. Before rushing to this conclusion the doctor should have studied the history of his own religion a little more carefully and critically. But this is by way of digression.

Dr. Farquhar's ignorance of Christian history.

Appendix to p. 205 f. n. *re Garuda.* The pre-Christian existence of Garuda-image is placed beyond all doubts by the Besnagar Column already referred to in p. 220. The Column is called *Garuda-dhwaja* because the figure of Garuda is inscribed on the top. (Dr. Sunitikumár Chátterjee in the *Hindu Mission Bulletin* as quoted in the M. R. p. 202, Aug. 1927). And the Column belongs to the middle of the 2nd century B. C.

Appendix to p. 306, line 6—It is above all debatable ground that the *Mahábhárata* in its present form contains at least four strata. In an earlier stage the battle of *Kurukshetra* was a *Kurupánchála* affair. The *Pándavas* were introduced latterly. But the original stratum can not elude the search of an watchful eye. Though there are two big Pándava brothers, Bhima and Arjuna, the generalissimoship is retained by the Pánchala prince, Dhristadyumna. There are two heroes on the *Kaurava* side, Bhishma and Drona. Others only came in the wake of the Pándavas, I mean Karna and Śailya. Though all the fight is done by Arjuna on the side of the Pándavas, it is a Pánchála hero, Śhikhandi, who is the cause of Bhishma's death, and though Arjuna does the day's work it is Dhristadyumna who actually kills Drona. So the original tradition is kept intact in spite of all the outward embellishments to hide it.

Appendix to p. 379. Insert the following after *to-day.* in line 23: Take for example the naval battle of Jutland. Mr. Churchill in *The World Crisis* won the battle with the help of Admiral Beatty. But Admiral Harper considerably upsets this legend in *The Truth about Jutland.* According to him "Beatty was definitely beaten in the preliminary encounter". It is Jellicoe who defeated the Germans. But Jellicoe in his turn is thrown to the wolves by the other account. The Germans on the other hand, have altogether a different tale to tell on the matter. Yet all this is contemporary history.

Appendix to p. 380, line 13—Read Holwell for Hallwell.

SUMMARY AND SUPPLEMENT.

Jesus is God historicised as *Indra*, *Varuna* or *Vishnu* of Hindu mythology. His is a composite character, but its elements have been gathered from all directions.

1. God is *Teacher*, so Jesus has been made a teacher. In that character a two-fold teaching has been palmed off on him—But the direct form i.e., the sermon on the mount or that in the plain, one contradicting the other, is incongruous with the indirect form, the parabolic teaching. All the same, both are compilations from old sayings. The following dictum of Wellhausen has become classical: "The Pharisaic teaching comprised all of Jesus's teaching, and very much more", as quoted by W. A. Campbell in p. 9 of *Did the Jews Kill Jesus?* Its fundamental differentiation we find in:

2. Jesus the *Messiah*—a dreamer, a visionary, "almost insane", with an eschatology of the immediate dissolution of the world, directly contradicting his other self:

3. The rebellious *Reformer*—almost a revolutionary, playing the part of an anti-sacerdotal prophet—a fanatical reformer of the then present state of things denouncing its corruptions, wrongs and hypocricies in the light of an ideal out of which springs:

4. Jesus the *Priest* in the twofold capacity of giving a theosophy, and striving to guard its inviolable character—right and left sending people to heaven or hell with the magic potency of his oracle, preaching a dogmatic creed and maintaining its dignity with almost a savage intolerance. The genesis of the persecution by the Church with all its woes and ills is to be traced to this aspect of that conglomerate called Jesus Christ.

5. Then the *Thaumaturge*, the devil-driver. This is really the evemerisation of Jesus, God of the Hebrews, by whose name adjuration was made as the name *Ráma* is used in India. What a mischief has it not done to the world by giving rise to witch craft?

6 The counterpart of, the above is the *Wonder-worker*, the worker of miracles—a manufacture of a superstitious age out of the symbolical sayings of old. To the credulous this purports to give Jesus the necessary credential as the messenger of God.

7. Then Jesus *the Promised One of God* fabricated by piecing together the Old Testament utterances misconstrued as prophecies, or the old great sayings interpreted as those of the Holy one, culminating

in "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Dies ever a real man with a quotation of such a mythical significance on his lips? Jesus thirsted on the cross. Why? Did he want a drink? No, not at all. He thirsted because "the scripture might be fulfilled (*Jn.* 19[28]). Excellent biography this! At least the gospellers were excellent conscious myth-makers Truly maintains Dr. Georg Brandes, who is known to be a very great critic: "In its seed and in its main spirit, Christianity existed from the moment when the Messiah of the prophets, Isaiah's "servant of the Lord," the persecuted righteous man of the Psalms and the Wisdom of Solomon, became fused into a single figure, that of Yahweh himself changed into a god that dies, rises again, and will return to sit in judgment on the world" (*Jesus*: *A Myth*, p. 70).

8. Next, in the gospel Jesus we find only a *narrow tribal patriot* refusing to do the most ordinary humanitarian deed to one outside the boundary simply because he thought himself intended for the 'house of Israel' only. Of course, a touch of universalistic characteristic did not fail to be smuggled into this hotchpotch conglomerate.

9. Jesus as the *embodiment of the special traits of all the great saints and prophets*, Jew and Gentile, on whom the gospellers or their interpolators could lay their hands from time to time, the great *Buddha* is no exception.

10. Regarding the story of *Jesus as modified by the Buddhist influence* many incidents have been alluded to, especially in pp. 219-228, Here are a few more parallels offered. (i) In *Luke* (2[41-49]) and Luke is most prolific in that respect (S. p. 223), Jesus is found missing by his parents while engaged in "Father's business". Seydel compares this with the *Lilita-Vistara* legend. Van den Bergh van Eysinga (*Indische*) "considers it important enough to presuppose the possibility of Indian influence" (Edward J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha* 1927, p. 39). (ii) Earlier in the verse 27, Simeon is made to come to the temple "in the spirit". It is considered to be a mistranslation for "through the air". And "this was in fact the way in which Asita ["a venerable sage", S. p. 227] came to visit the infant Gotama" (Ibid). (iii) In the Baptism (*Mt.* 3[13]) the question arises as to the propriety of the initiation of the superior by the inferior. Here also there is a parallel in the abstract. Vide *Lilita-Vistara* by Raja Rajendralal Mitra, Ch. viii. But if *Matthew's* original is searched in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* the parallel becomes closer as Thomas holds (p. 239) (iv). On the other hand, if the translation of the passage in W. Woodville Rockhill's *Life of the*

Buddhist influence.

Buddha (p. 17) is compared with *First Gospel of Infancy* (Ch. x in B. H. Cowper's *Apocryphal Gospels*, or ch. iv in Hone's) a parallel in another point, i. e., supercession of the older deity, is established which, according to Lillie, cannot be explained except by interaction (*Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 30). (v) The woman's* praise of Jesus in *Lk.* 11[27-28], has its origin in Kisa Gotami's hymn of the Buddha (Vide Mrs. Rhys Davids' *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 170). When it is pointed out by Van Eysinga that the verses are misplaced by Luke without any connection with the context, the borrowing is established without the least shadow of a doubt. (vi) In *Divyávadána* we find Ánanda asking water from an outcast girl Prakriti drawing water at the well. This is exactly the case with Jesus and the Samaritan woman * at the well (*Jn.* 4[9]). In Eysinga's comparison "the story is more natural in a Buddhistic than a Christian setting" as Thomas puts it (p. 242). (vii) Jesus' choosing five disciples (S. p. 181) as given in *John* 1[35-51] together with the story of Nathanael and the fig-tree is very striking. Buddha got his five disciples at the persuasion of a Bráhmin whose place is occupied by John the Baptist in the gospel. And in both the cases only five disciples are chosen. (viii) In *Mark* 16[15] we find, "Go ye into all *the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*." This flatly contradicts the original conception of the Jesuine propaganda which was to be confined within the four walls of the Jewry only as given in *Matthew* 10[5]. Who knows that it is not the influence of the Buddha's charge to his disciples, as found in the *Vinaya-pitaka* I, 11[1] and *Sanyukta-nikáya* vol. 1, p. 105, which has thus modified the whole aspect of the missionary enterprise of the gospels ? The Buddha sent away his disciples on their errand with the following command : "Go ye now, O Monks, and wander, for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for *the world*, for the good, for the gain, and for the welfare of *gods and men*" (Prof. S. Tachibana, *The Ethics of Buddhism*, p. 16). (xi) Who knows whether the Christist cry, "Change ye your minds (E. D., p. 277), the kingdom of heaven is at hand" was not modelled after the following announcement of the prince of all itinerant preachers ; "Open ye your ears ; the deliverance from death is found" (Dr. Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha*, (Eng. transl., 1927, p. 1). (x) The *second coming*

* Curiously enough whereas in the Buddhistic legends about a woman the proper name is given, in its imitation in the gospels only "a woman" is mentioned. This makes assurance doubly sure. See also the story of the gospel adulteress, the Buddhist Ambapali, whose account is best seen in pp. 186-189 of *The Life of Gotama the Buddha* (1926) by E. H. Brewster. Vide also Supra p. 204.

(advent of Maitreya—*Chakkavatti sihanáda Sutta* in Mahá-Vagga) is Buddhist also. (xi) So also the end of the world by a conflagration as seen in 2 *Pet* 3^{10-12}. Vide Introduction to *Jataka* and *Anguttara Nikáya* 4^{100}. (xii) Jesus says (in answer to the Jews who tried to confute him): "Which of you convicteth ("prove"—American Goodspeed's translation) me of sin?" (*Jn.* 8^{46}). The Buddha says (in answer to the *devas* who came to confute him) in the third person as was his wont: "In him no fault is found, no error proved" (Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Kindred Sayings* I, p. 35. *Sanyukta Nikáya* 1, 4^{5}:

tassa accaya na vijjanti tassa natthi apagatam.

तस्स अच्चय न विज्जन्ति तस्स नत्थि अपगतम् ।

Seydel has collected fifty such parallels. But all scholars do not agree in their significance. Van Eysinga, E. W. Hopkins, Garbe, or Charpentier takes one or other or a number only as very cogent but not all. Mr. Thomas, no longer able to defy the conclusion that the evangelists were influenced by the life and teaching of the Buddha, begs the whole question when, considering the life of Jesus as historical, he observes that "any resemblances to the legend of Buddha are merely accidental curiosities (p. 247). Is there any *a priori* ground to take the historicity of Jesus for granted? The truth, on the contrary, as this volume endeavours to show, lies quite the other way about. Instead of exciting mere museum interests in us these resemblances make far-reaching historical revelations.

[For an obvious reason (S. p. 204 f. n.) I have abstained from introducing the Krishna legends as a creative influence of the Christ myth. Orientalists, both European and Indian, have suspected the incorporation of Christ legends in the Krishna story as depicted in the *puránas*. A. Weber in *Indian Antiquary* (1874. p. 21), Hopkins in the *Religions of India* (p. 430), Macnicol in *Indian Theism* (App. C, p. 275), Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar in *Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems* (p. 37) have emphasised such points as Krishna suckling at his mother's breast, the birth festival, pregnant Yasoda with Nanda having gone to pay taxes, the massacre of the children by Kansa, Krishna in the shepherd's hut etc. etc., as if borrowed from Child-Christ stories. Dr. Carpenter also insists in some other connections: "It is impossible not to see traces of the Christian influence" (*Theism in Medieval India*, p. 409). As Dr. Seal has pointed out, these coincidences can be explained by their common source, the Buddhist influence (S. p. 173). I have, in my Bengali treatise, *Dharmer Tattva O Sádhan* (Theory and Practice of Religion: *Krishna Tattva*, Ch. vi) tried somewhat elaborately to trace them to their pre-Christian origin. Krishna's

shepherd connections have easily been explained there from Vedic myths and myth formations thereof. According to A. Barth, these pastoral scenes are connected in a thousand ways with the most ancient representations of the Veda (*Religions of India*, pp. 222—223). The modern orthodox Hindu scholars are rather reluctant to accept the Christian influence as an explanation of the striking nature of the resemblances, but are hard pressed for an explanation. They admit the resemblance. Says Mr. Hemchandra Ray Chaudhuri, M.A., in his *Early History of the Vaisnava Sect*, p. 88: "No one can help being struck by the points of resemblance between the story of the Child Krishna and those of the Child Christ." He too has utilised a couple of solar myths to explain away some of the resemblances. But there is one thing to be seriously taken into consideration in this connection. When these savants wrote, the gospel narrative was taken to be an historical account. But all this has been changed since. The authenticity of the gospels has been contested at every point. We have shown that the *manger* etc. are borrowed from the Dionysiac myth, the birth-day festivals are Roman celebrations transformed and adopted later on, the very birth-day being a direct borrowing. The Madonna is a silent assimilation of an Egyptian image (S. p. 85). "The pictures and sculptures wherein Isis is represented in the act of suckling her child Horus," Philip Vivian reminds us, "formed the foundation of the Christian figures and paintings of the Madonna and Child" (*The Churches and Modern Thoughts* p. 107). So no miraculous transmission of the likeness of "our Lord" was required to inspire the great Italian masters. The taxation and the massacre have been found out as so many myths. They were introduced from somewhere for some purpose. If from somewhere, why not from India? In the *Vishnu Purána* V, 3[19], we find the same story of taxation; the massacre of the innocents is there, Nanda is not the father but, like Joseph, only the foster father; so on and so forth. But is the question of date a serious handicap? Yes, but there can not be an *a priori* conclusion that this *Purána* is post-Christian as far as these legends are concerned, and that, though there are things in it which tend to surely bring down it to the third or fourth century A. D. (vide F. E. Pargiter, *The Purána Text*, p. xxviii), it is most probable that the Krishna story is far earlier and the birth legends in the gospels are very late interpolations. Dr. Bhandarkar says that the A´bhiras brought the stories of the Child Christ to India on their eastward march from Syria or Asia Minor in the first century A. D. That is absurd. If can be said as positively as ever that there was

no Christ story yet formed in Judæa or Alexandria in the first century to travel through Syria or Asia Minor to be brought to India. And we learn from the *Contra Celsus* of Origen (185—254 A. D.,) that additions and alterations were still being made in the gospels (S. p. 251). In the opinion of Professor Gustav Volkmar of Zurich, referred to by John Patrick in *"The Apology of Origen* (p. 5) Celsus' book, the *True word*, now not extant as destroyed by Christian fanaticism and in which the remark was originally made "was written about 240." According to Rev. Patrick himself it could not be before 170. Also, some legends about Jesus now found in the gospels were not known to Origen (S. p. 148). They were evidently introduced at the latter part of the third century. Who can assure us that the introduction of new materials did not continue a century more or still further downward. If, on the contrary, it is premised that the first stratum of the *Vishnu Purána* was laid in the first century and this is not an improbable hypothesis in view of the gospel stories being developed during three or four centuries together, then there is nothing illogical in holding that this *Purána* lent the gospels some of its legends. "The resemblances become particularly striking when we," observes Mr. Barth, "refer to the apocryphal Gospels, especially the Gospel of Infancy" (Work cited, p. 222 f. n. See also Lillie). Why so? Is it not because, in the gospels, they found time just to touch the main features of the story which they afterwards elaborated at leisure. So now, we find by higher criticism, the table is turned in favour of the Krishna legends. But I am not an Orientalist, so I will not dogmatise. And I have no axe to grind by establishing the priority of the Krishna cult. I am open to conviction.]

11. Jesus the jolly diner with publicans and sinners—*a Wine-bibber* who does not shun women even under suspicious circumstances, rather harsh on one "who looks upon woman as a snare" (Brandes, (*Jesus : A Myth*). This is wholly incompatible with :

12. Jesus the gloomy puritan, *the man of sorrows* making men "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and practically advising them to prefer a beggar's life.

13. One earliest stratum entering into the matrix of the gospel figure is Jesus *the Son of David*, an attribute thought to be very essential for his divinity at one stage of his development, and therefore supported by two fantastically artificial ancestral lists interpolated into two of the canonical gospels, but one cancels the other. This is an old Testament contribution. Anti-Davidic utterances, however are not wanting. Yes, the diverse tendencies of the gospels run counter

to each other. Anonymous hands applied to the task at different times have not even attempted seriously at consistency.

14. By far the most important contribution is from Alexandrian Gnosticism with its doctrine of *Logos*, systematised and popularised by Philo. This idea has supplied the prologue and many other elements to the Fourth gospel though not therein pursued consistently throughout. This new base has made its Jesus quite different from that of the synoptics. But the most efficient contribution in that line is the epistolary literature of Paul. Paul's Jesus Christ with death and resurrection is symbolical—an allegory reconciling the world with God. It has been shaped by means of theosophising the speculations of Plato. So it is not untrue as Paul says that he got his idea not from any *man* but from within. Paul had nothing to do with *man* Jesus. He never mentions even by name the so-called "Jesus of Nazareth." He simply says :

Paul's Christ.

"I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (*Gal.* 1¹¹-¹²). Compare *Col.* 1¹⁵-¹⁶ also. After a gross misinterpretation of the neo-Platonic idea of creation through "word made flesh" this was engrafted on The Gnostic doctrine of *Logos*.

15. The various *Cults of suffering and dying gods.* Dr. Frazer has proved almost to demonstration that all the races of mankind set out with a Sky-God and an Earth-Goddess as the creative principles of nature. The vicissitudes of nature being allegorised as the god's suffering, death and resurrection for the good of the world, the doctrine of incarnation and salvation through suffering was developed. As, through the eschatological superstitions and the dogmas of the imminent end of the world and the Day of Judgment near at hand, the life in this world was thought to be of no consequence, the gospel-Jesus in his capacity of a dying god was utilised as an instrument to avert this doom. This idea of *Saviour God* was affiliated to the crucifixion ceremony of "the son of the father," enriched as it was by being allied to the Jewish ritual of the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb and of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the 'sacrificed one.' Summarising the scholarly conclusion of the age, both mythic and historic, Mr. Campbell states : "Christianity is the impersonal outcome of the alliance between Stoicism and the Hellenistic or Græcised Judaism [i. e. Gnosticism] that flourished in Alexandria, and that Jesus himself is the assumed and freely invented personal incarnation of that movement whose history is contained in the Psalms and the

Prophets". (Work cited, p. 3). And we may add to the list the Just Man of Plato's Republic. Mr. Manilal C. Parekh deplores that Rammohun's conclusion of the birth, miracles, crucifixion and resurrection "was like acting the play of Hamlet without the part of Hamlet" (*Rajarshi Rammohun Roy*, p. 45). Though living in the 20th century these medievally minded people forget that Hamlet's part has already been played out. Hamlet is gone beyond the hope of recovery. If the play, I mean the compilation called the gospels, is to be retained even in part, it is the method of Rammohun that can accomplish it. The Rájarshi understood it a century ago (vide S. Ch. XII).

Conglomeration.

At first simply the Messiah, a "son of David," the promised deliverer of Israel from political oppression, then endowed with supernatural powers indicating his divine authority. Now he figures as the incarnation of the Divine Word, then as the suffering and dying god—god on his own account. This completes the round of Jesus myth.

The method and its psychology.

Wherever the name Jesus occurs in the ancient literature not excepting even the absurdly fantastical figure of the *Revelation* of John, and whenever it has been possible to Christianise it with additions and alterations, it has been incorporated in the New Testament, and this incongruous conglomerate has been the upshot. Man makes his god after his image, so the gospel Jesus, in spite of his being termed "the God of the Very God," necessarily shares to the full the ignorance and superstition of the time that made him so. Do not the gods of all nations possess these blemishes blended with their supernatural powers ? So the so-called biographers never felt any need to offer an apology for the character of Jesus as the mere humanisers of our day are compelled to do because of their quite a changed view-point.

Now the cry is : Back to Jesus. But to which Jesus, pray ! We find no historical person to fall back upon. But the world possesses a more massive bulwark in the collective experience of humanity. And that is the only protection man needs.

CONCLUSION.

Myth-theory and historicists.

The historicists in general and the biographists in particular vociferously assure us of the futility of the myth-theory. But recent occurrences show that the religious consciousness is evidently getting nervous over it, protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. Do they really mean what they simulate? Did not Dean Inge a number of years ago similarly think Abbé Loisy even not worth answering? But what now? Is not the neo-Unitarian performance of Renan, execrated by orthodoxy sixty years ago, as Robertson points out, now the orthodoxy of the scholars? The day of reckoning is coming. Wait and see! Yes, it is easy for a clever man to write a plausible defence even of a palpably absurd theory as the gloomy dean himself is aware, but the argument cuts both ways. Though they affect to ignore or speak slightingly of the rushing wave like the proverbial Dame Partington, I say this without meaning to be disrespectful, inwardly they know, they have come to the end of their tether. Take only two of the recent historicist publications. Dr. Joseph Klausner's *Jesus of Nazareth* is almost a half-way house towards the myth-theory, as the orthodox would say. But we are concerned only with the method of his collecting materials for the historicity of the part he pleases to retain. This is how he sifts the Rabbinical account: When it does not suit his purpose, the "Sages of the *Talmud*" no longer remembered the historical events as "they were satisfied with the popular stories" (p. 19), but when it answers his purpose, he forthwith makes a somersault and the testimony of the same very Rabbis turns out "a story bearing the stamp of truth" (p. 42), and necessarily the historicity is instantly proved! This is also the case with Dr. J. Warschauer in *The Historical Life of Jesus.* He strives "to dispose of the so-called Christ myth" (p. 3), and to base his case of historicity on the evidence of St. Paul (1 *Cor.* 15^{56}; *Gal.* 1^{19}, 2^{89}, 15^{58}; 1 *Thess.* 4^{15-17}). The author knows full well that Paul "repudiates human authority" (p. 305), and claims supernatural knowledge. But the Doctor himself, on the contrary, repudiates supernaturalism and repeatedly avows that Christianity is founded on the fable of resurrection. Such a logical suicide in broad day-light does not build history. Approvingly incorporating Professor Kirsopp Lake's suggestion, he affirms that what the women saw was perhaps a young man at a wrong tomb, but before the mistake was corrected they were frightened off to tell a misleading story. But, pray, if the orthodox story

Their logical suicide.

of resurrection is given up, what remains of Paul's testimony to the historicity? With resurrection does not Paul go out of it altogether? Yes, and the fate of historicity is sealed as far, at least, as the case of Dr. Warschauer is concerned. The author only succeeds in weaving a huge piece of *ignoratio elenchi* around him. Yes, "it becomes fairly clear that the defence is collapsing all along the line—an ominously shortened line at that", as Robertson has wickedly put it (L. G., May, 1927).

Against Professor Drews' affirmation that all the benefits, material as well as spiritual, conferred on mankind by the Christian culture can be preserved intact, even if the *historical* Jesus, its chief conner-stone, is removed, Dr. Thorburn in the preface of his *Jesus the Christ: Historical or Mythical?* presses the suggestive query: "What the inevitable result to the world, in such a case, would be, it requires no inspired prophet to foretell"? Dr. Thorburn is a Unitarian, but this is the very innuendo that was proposed by the Trinitarian to stop the mouth of the sceptic when the deity of Christ was questioned. However, the question is inconsequent after the memorable utterance, to which we already referred more than once, of such a staunch historicist as Dr. Schmiedel to the effect that religion will suffer no injury if the historicity of Jesus is disproved. Here is a case how the long-cherished belief in the historicity of a person has been taken away without causing any disturbance in the ordinary tenor of life. With the following remark the Danish scholar Georg Brandes, "the greatest critic of modern times," has introduced his book, *Jesus: A myth*: "*For more than six hundred years the average man in Switzerland and elsewhere has never doubted that William Tell was a farmer from Burglen in the canton of Uri, and a son-in-law of Walter Furst, likewise from Uri......Through Schiller's beautiful tragedy, "William Tell", written under the inspiration of Goethe, the significance of Tell as a Swiss national hero and a personification of the love of liberty became established for all time to come.*" Now the legendary character of the Tell story has been fully established to all rational minds and been traced to its original sources. It has been proved that the legend has no historic foundation whatever. "*He never existed. But that makes no difference. He is and will remain an active ideal, and as a model he still rules the minds of men. The same is true of another figure, also belonging to the world of legend.*"

Christianity without Christ no harm to humanity.

William Tell

But does it not rob the world of a beloved and beautiful personality? This question may be asked. To which the following reply is given by Dr. Edward Greenly in *The Rationalist Annual*, 1927:

For those who were formerly under the spell of that personality few things are more astonishing than that we could ever have felt like that. For those who never have been under that spell this attractiveness does not exist. I have been told by Sinhalese Buddhists that they do not find the figure at all attractive. The Synoptic Jesus, even when uttering admirable sentiments, such as "love", does not utter them in a lovable and winning manner. He gives them out as "commandments," dictatorially, with an air of superiority, as if ex cathedrâ. If a contemporary spoke to us like that, should we feel much attraction to him? If, then, criticism result in the disappearance of an historical Jesus, men will not really lose anything. Nobility, devotion, and love were in the world ages before an historical Jesus was thought of and they will be there still ages after that picture has vanished from the imagination of men. In the higher human nature they are secure.

Higher humanity safe without a personality of dubious import like Christ.

Vedántaratna Maheschandra Ghosh is substantially of this opinion. After a thorough psycho-analysis of the character of Christ he comes to the following conclusion:

"We are certain that the Christian world can not long remain obsessed by the ideal of so-called 'love-supported' anger or 'anger-supported' love. Sooner or later it will throw off the thraldom of this anger-fed religion and will accept with gratitude the Indian ideal of *Maitri, Karuná Mudità* and equanimity of temper" (*The Modern Review*, Feb. 1924). So the disappearance of the Christ-figure virtually makes for the good of the world.

Verdict of the history of Christianity.

It is by reading history only through coloured spectacles that one can say as John Beattie Crozier has said in his *History of Intellectual Development* that Jesus indeed gave to the world a perfect religion which got a narrow interpretation and wrong direction at the hands of his followers, and "but for the influence of St. Paul who threw open Christianity to all the world, the broad emancipating spirit of the Gospel would have been crushed under the weight of Jewish tradition" (vol. i. p. 266). This is, no doubt, holding history upside down. It does not strike these prepossessed students of history how is it that those to whom Jesus laid bare his heart both openly and secretly; in collaboration with whom he worked out his scheme; who worked with him and took him to be God's *anointed* after hearing the declaration (S. p. 189) repeatedly with their own ears—did not enter into his spirit or cared not to follow in his wake, but it was reserved for one to deliver the

message correctly who neither saw and heard him in the flesh nor visited his field of work or met any of his disciples except after some years of his *illumination from within*? Absurd! A right estimate of history is that there was a Christist movement in pre-Christian Judæa coming down at least from the immediate past with its intensive Messianist propagandism which was let loose from its old moorings after the destruction of the Temple and which, being reinforced by Mediterranean religions and especially influenced by the Alexandrian Gnosticism, returned home to Jerusalem, and this is, in the gospels, depicted as Christ's *home-coming* (*Mk.* 3[20]). It is this that has henceforth been known as Christianity. The Gospel Jesus is a construction of the church (S. p. 243), as Dr. Carpenter has said.

Jesus a construction.

Addendum.

Does the relation between Jesus and Baptist suggest historicity?

One outstanding question has been left over till the end. And it is this. Jesus had relations with John the Baptist. But the Baptist is supposed to be an historical person. Ergo, Jesus is historical. The scathing reply comes from Dr. W. B. Smith (*The Open Court*, Jan. 1914): The argument, if thrown into a Syllogism, would have (i) for its major premise: *If a person is set in relations with historical persons, then the former is historical;* (ii) for its minor premise: *Jesus is set in relations with historical John the Baptist and others*; and (iii) for its conclusion: *Therefore Jesus is historical.* Formally the conclusion is correct. But both the premises are materially false. Artemis and Hermes are mythical personages. Yet they are set in relations with the historical Hiero of Syracuse. Shamesh is a mythical Sun-god, but he delivered a code of laws to the highly historical Hammurabi. There are many such instances. So the major premise falls through. Jesus' relations with Caiaphas, Pilate, or Herod have been found out to be figments of imagination. But John the Baptist remains. Yes, but that is on the evidence of Josephus and his account is "vague to a degree (Ant. 18.5.2)." The whole section may be removed without any disturbance to his narrative. "That the accounts of his Baptism of Jesus are entirely fictive, though deep-thoughted, is uuanswerably shown in the profound work of Hermann Usener on *Das Weihnachtsfest* (pp. 38—71). Surely no one regards Matt. xi. 1—19, Luke vii. 18—35, as historic." So both the premises go and goes with them the base of the argument.

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27th September, 1927.